

HOPE &

Passion



**ON A
CRACKED
PLATTER**

♥ *Connie*



Kintsugi is the Japanese art of repairing broken pottery with gold and lacquer. It is the process of taking something that's broken and turning it into something even more beautiful.

Hello!

The world can feel overwhelming and chaotic. With alarming events happening at a rapid rate and depression and suicide on the rise, many people feel hopeless. But I've discovered how to create joy and well-being, even in the darkest times, and I want to help you do the same.

I understand that facing hard blows and experiencing deep sadness can be devastating—I've been there. The hopeful news is I've found my way out and learned how to create my own happiness, even during hard times! I've become really good at it, and you can do it too!

One thing I know for sure is life rarely unfolds perfectly for long, and if you focus too much on the glitches and broken parts, you'll miss out on a lot of truly awesome moments.

The truth is, most people are not powerless victims of their circumstances. Including you. At any moment, YOU can take charge of your life and change its direction. It's never too late to turn things around!

When I hit one of my lowest points—facing a health crisis, the death of my daughter and dad, and a divorce all within a short amount of time—it was hard. But through that unexpected storm, I found 'gold' in my situation, focused on the 'glue' of daily habits, and added the 'glaze' of joyful moments.

My life was reshaped and made more beautiful. The principles taught in this book are not just ideas—they're powerful tools that can help you rebuild and elevate your life.



Do not be dismayed by the
brokenness of the world. All things
break. And all things can be
mended. Not with time, as they say,
but with intention.
So go. Love intentionally,
extravagantly, unconditionally.
The broken world waits in darkness
for the light that is you.

L.R. Knost

When God told me to stop whining, I was in a place of feeling utterly helpless and hopeless. My situation felt so bleak that I could have easily rattled off a dozen reasons why things couldn't possibly get better.

Hopelessness goes hand in hand with despair and depression, and I struggled with all three and reinforced the belief that my life was in the toilet. Wallowing in self-pity and whining about my problems reinforced the fact that they were real.

Hopelessness clouded my mind and paralyzed my ability to see a way forward. But a nudge from God reminded me that my life wouldn't change until I did—and I already had what it took to make it better. God showed me that it wasn't His job to fix my life—it was mine. And, I was fully capable of upgrading my life. This was my job to do!

Looking back now, I can see how stuck I was—how repeating the same old thoughts and behaviors kept me trapped in misery. I call that being stuck in a rut.

How about you?

- Get out your journal and write about a time in your life when prayer or seeking guidance led to clarity in your life. How did it feel to receive that guidance, and what steps did you take as a result?
- If you could change one thing about your current circumstances, what would it be?
- What's stopping you, and how can you take one step closer to making that change today?

SIMPLE WAYS TO CULTIVATE HOPE

- **Begin with Gratitude:** Each morning, write down three things you're thankful for. Focusing on abundance shifts your mindset to one of positivity and possibility.
- **Visualize the Positive:** Spend 5–10 minutes visualizing a current challenge resolved in the best possible way. Imagine the feelings of relief, joy, and gratitude that come with the solution.
- **Use Affirmations:** Speak words of hope aloud, such as, "I trust that everything is working out for my highest good," or, "Hope is lighting my way forward." Repeat them throughout the day.
- **Create a Hopeful Atmosphere:** Diffuse uplifting oils like Wild Orange or Bergamot to clear mental fog and elevate your energy. Apply them to your wrists or temples for an instant boost.
- **Ground Yourself in Nature:** Spend time outdoors, even for a few minutes, to connect with the steady rhythms of life. Before heading out, rub Cedarwood or Vetiver onto your feet for grounding.
- **Celebrate Small Wins:** Acknowledge even tiny progress. Diffuse essential oils, play an uplifting song, or journal about what went well today. Let these moments reinforce your belief in forward momentum.

Dream



My mother was a responsible, hard-working, practical, and realistic woman—so much so that, to her, life felt like a constant grind. She thought dreaming was impractical and often scorned those who indulged in it, dismissing them as unrealistic.

My dad was a hard worker too, but unlike my mom, he found excitement in everyday tasks. He was a dreamer who welcomed new experiences and had a way of making life fun and interesting.

Their contrasting approaches to life shaped my understanding of dreams—my dad's way was far more appealing. My dad encouraged me to dream and often said, "It's better to beg for forgiveness than to ask for permission," explaining that waiting for permission could mean never pursuing what you truly want.

But when I started sharing my big dreams with him, he told me they were too big. He said they were far-fetched and I needed to be more realistic.

I realized my dad was only comfortable with dreams he believed were achievable—things he could envision himself doing. So when I presented my big, far-fetched dreams to him, his instinct was to try and rein them in.

I knew where he was coming from. In the beginning, my big dreams seemed unrealistic to me too! Dreaming big did not come naturally to me. It took a lot of encouragement and a big push out of my comfort zone before I could even entertain the idea.



Don't you long
for something
different to happen,
something so exciting
and new it carries
you along with it
like a great tide,
something that
lets your life blaze
and burn so the whole
world can see it?

Juliet Marillier

Gold

Passion is the spark that fuels creativity, joy, and fulfillment. It's the inner flame that drives you to pursue what makes your heart sing and brings excitement to your life.



Reigniting passion starts with tuning into what inspires you and allowing yourself to follow it unapologetically.

- **Reconnect with Joy:** Reflect on activities or hobbies that used to excite you. Write down three things you've loved doing in the past and plan to revisit at least one this week.
- **Use Essential Oils for Inspiration:** Diffuse or apply Passion® Blend (or mix Clary Sage, Wild Orange, and Cinnamon Bark) while journaling about what makes you feel alive.
- **Create a Vision:** Imagine your most passionate self. What are you doing? How does it feel? Write or sketch your vision to bring it to life.

glue

Reconnecting with your passion will bring energy and joy to your life, even in the busiest seasons. These simple practices will help you stay aligned with what truly lights you up and keeps your spirit alive.

- Dedicate one hour each week to something that excites you. Whether it's writing, painting, dancing, or dreaming, let this time refuel your energy and remind you of what lights you up. Diffuse Ginger or Cinnamon Bark to amplify focus and excitement.
- Pause each day to ask yourself: "What can I do today that aligns with my passion?" Write it down, and commit to taking at least one small action.



WHAT MAKES YOU FEEL
EXCITED ABOUT LIFE?

WHEN AN IDEA INSPIRES
YOU, TAKE A STEP TOWARD
IT.

DO SOMETHING TODAY
THAT IGNITES YOUR
PASSION.

I was right—more than thirty years later, I still have clients and do as many massages as I want.

As a massage therapist, my days have flowed effortlessly—ideal clients have always found their way to me and I have never felt the need to worry or force a thing. Doing massages and attracting awesome clients has been as natural and easy as breathing.

Massage school changed the course of my life. It set me on a healing path that opened the doors to countless holistic courses and trainings.

As I learned, I shared my experiences with others, and this led to me becoming an author, teacher, and wellness consultant. I created a lucrative job that's perfect for me!

After I discovered truly pure essential oils, they become a cornerstone of my life. I started using oils for everything—massage, replacing medications, caring for pets, and enhancing my houseplants and garden.

Looking back, it's almost surreal to see how far I've come—from feeling powerless and stuck to living a life I genuinely love. I used to rebel and feel like an outcast, constantly seeking others' approval. Now, I follow my heart and don't care what people think about me—I've found my tribe, and I love my life!

I have a big family and a lot of friends, and my house is often overflowing with laughter, love, good food, and my people. I've grown comfortable in my own space, doing things my way. I'm clearly in my groove, and life is flowing beautifully. I'm fully embracing the life I've created!

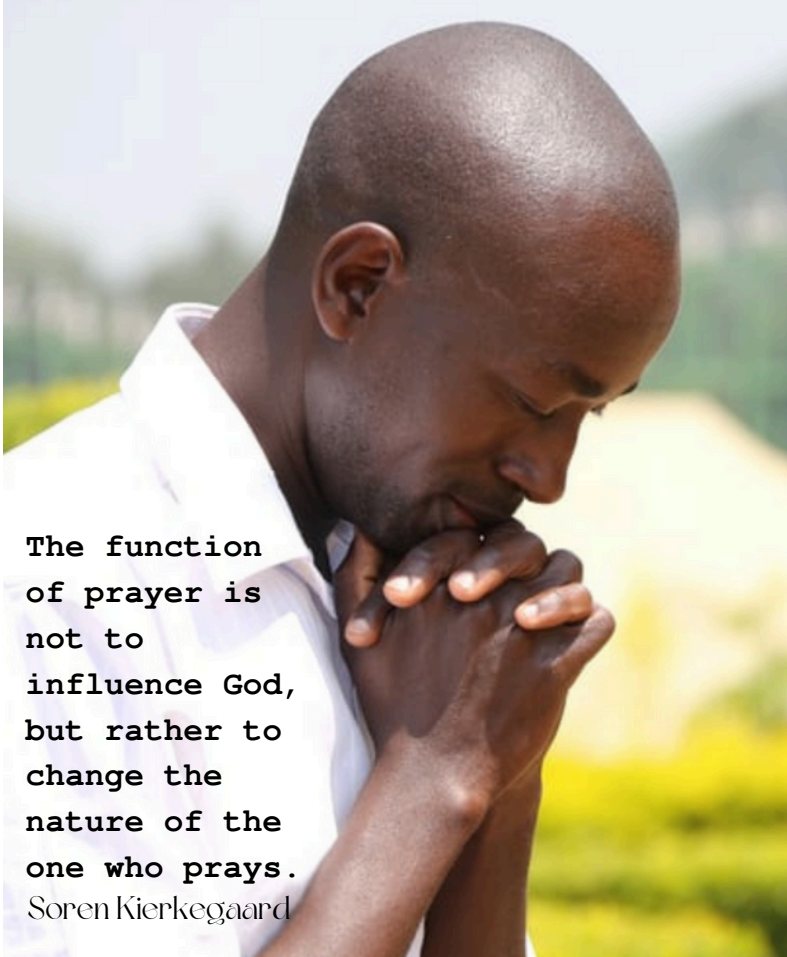
- Reflect on a moment when you felt God's presence in the stillness. What did you learn or feel in that moment?
- In what areas of your life do you struggle to surrender control to God? How can you practice trusting His plan more fully?
- How do love and trust show up in your relationships—with others, yourself, and God? What steps can you take to strengthen these connections?
- What does it mean to you to live a life rooted in love, trust, and connection? How does this align with the way you're living now?
- When was the last time you felt truly aligned with God's purpose for your life? What circumstances helped you feel that way? How can you reconnect with that sense of alignment?

God's invitation to connect with Him is an invitation to let divine love flow through each of us, transforming our relationships, our purpose, and ultimately, our world.

This need for both community and divinity is written into the very fabric of our being.

Our connection to other people enriches us in ways we often take for granted. When we share laughter, comfort, or even silence with others, we strengthen the bonds that sustain us through life's ups and downs.

Relationships help us grow, teach us empathy, and remind us of our shared humanity. They give us the opportunity to both give and receive love—an act that heals and fulfills us in profound ways.



The function
of prayer is
not to
influence God,
but rather to
change the
nature of the
one who prays.
Soren Kierkegaard

Even though I know the benefits, I'm not naturally wired to slow down and sit quietly. I tend to go full speed ahead until I crash. Then I sleep, recharge, and get right back to going strong again.

STILL.

I know it's important to just be sometimes. Here are some practices I've found helpful:

- Go to church: Sit still, listen, and aim to be present in worship. When your mind wanders, gently rein it back in. Allow the sacred space to ground and center you.
- Do restorative yoga: Focus on slow, yin-style poses, clearing your mind, and holding the poses. Notice when your mind drifts, and gently bring it back to the present moment.
- Use essential oils: Apply oils to the back of your ears, forehead, or chest, or diffuse calming blends. Sit in a quiet place and focus on your breath for 3-5 minutes. Some days, even five minutes feels long, but it's worth it. With each inhale, let peace fill you, and with each exhale, release tension.
- Do calming activities: Apply essential oils and pair them with guided meditations, sound baths, or focused breathing. Choose whatever helps you relax and simply be in the moment. These practices can ground you and bring a sense of peace amidst the busyness of life.

My Heavenly Father saw my need and reached out to someone who was tuned in enough to listen. That person, then followed through on a prompting, without even knowing the profound impact it would have on me.

When I opened that envelope I was overwhelmed with gratitude—not just for the money, but also for the reminder that God hears and answers prayers! His love and concern reached me through someone else’s willingness to act on a prompting.

Several years later, I was walking along a private stretch of beach when something fascinating caught my attention. For a long stretch, the smooth rocks scattered across the sand looked very similar—uniform in color, size, and shape.

Then, as I walked further, the rocks began to change. Suddenly, they were marked with crater-like holes, pitted as if by time and elements. I didn’t think much of it at first, but as I continued, I noticed the consistency of the change—rock after rock bore these unique craters, all clustered in that area.

Further along, the landscape shifted again. This time, large rocks jutted up from the sand, completely covered in barnacles. The transformation was so striking I had to stop and take it in. All of the rocks hosting barnacles were large—much bigger than all the rest, and being coated with barnacles gave them an entirely different texture and appearance than the other rocks on the beach.

A decorative border of intricate gold scrollwork and floral patterns surrounds the central text area. The scrollwork features acanthus leaves, vines, and circular motifs, creating a classic, elegant frame.

Shine!

- **Vision Exercise:** Spend 10 minutes creating a list or vision board of your top 10 desires. Focus on how achieving these goals would make you feel.
- **Gratitude Practice:** Each evening, write down three things that went well during the day and express gratitude for them.
- **Grounding Ritual:** Diffuse Frankincense or Cedarwood while journaling about your values and goals to deepen your connection to purpose.
- **Daily Affirmation:** Begin your day by declaring, “I trust myself. I am capable of creating the life I desire.” Repeat this whenever doubt arises.
- **Let Go:** Identify one thing you need to release—whether it’s a habit, relationship, or mindset—and take an intentional step toward letting it go.
- **Take Action:** Choose one area of your life where you’ve been settling and take a bold step to elevate it—whether it’s updating your resume, signing up for a class, or starting a new routine.

A decorative gold floral border with intricate scrollwork and leaf patterns surrounds the central text area.

DECLARE YOUR INTENTIONS

- Write down your declarations. Start with 3-5 things you want to manifest in your life. These can be financial goals, personal growth, relationships, or experiences.
- Frame them in the present tense. For example, instead of saying "I want to be successful," say "I am successful and capable of achieving my goals."
- Incorporate "What if" into your dreams and declarations. If you struggle to believe your declarations, add "What if" at the start to ease your mind. For example, "What if I am financially free and living my dream life today?"
- Say your declarations out loud every day: Speak them with confidence and excitement, even if you don't completely believe them yet. The more you say them, the more you will begin to believe them.

glaze

Declarations are more than words —they are commitments to yourself and your vision. When you declare something with intention and belief, you set a powerful energy into motion that aligns your thoughts, actions, and emotions with your desires.

The beauty of declaring your truth lies in its simplicity. It doesn't require perfection; it requires faith. Declarations are an act of courage and clarity, reminding you that you have the power to choose your mindset and shape your future. When you speak your intentions out loud, you claim them as real and give them the space to grow.

Let your declarations be infused with hope, purpose, and confidence. Whether you're declaring love, health, success, or peace, believe that your words carry weight. Speak them boldly, act on them with intention, and trust that the universe will rise to meet you.

Declarations add harmony and joy to your journey by grounding you in your truth and inspiring you to live fully. Let this practice guide you to a life of purpose and alignment, one word at a time.



Rdirect



There have been countless times in my life when things have taken a sideways turn, and my carefully laid plans have completely gone awry. There were four significant moments when life was derailed so drastically that it left me feeling utterly upside down for a while:

- When I was 30, I had an emotional breakdown that led to me being hospitalized for six weeks.
- Three years later, at 33, my first husband divorced me.
- At 59, my bowel perforated, and I became very septic. I needed an emergency surgery to save my life, and woke up with an ostomy bag and had to spend three and a half weeks in the ICU.
- Less than two years later, at 60, while I was still recovering from a health crisis and the death of my daughter and father, my fourth husband divorced me.

Each of these events hit me like a freight train. I didn't see any of them coming, and I don't know how I could have prevented them. They were all life-altering, soul-shaking moments that left me reeling, unsure of how I was going to move forward.

But every time, I found my footing, and in the process, my life was redirected.



FOR GOD
HAS NOT
GIVEN US A
SPIRIT OF
FEAR, BUT
OF POWER
AND OF
LOVE AND
OF A SOUND
MIND.

2 TIMOTHY 1:7

Now it's your turn to step boldly into the driver's seat of your life. Whether it's money management, relationships, or another area where you feel stuck, commit to learning and growing. Read a book, take a course, or seek guidance from someone you trust. The more you invest in yourself, the more empowered you'll be to make decisions that serve your highest good.

Every choice you make is laying the foundation for your future. Expect them to bear fruit. If something in your life feels heavy or misaligned, release it to create space for what truly serves you.

Expect the time and effort you are putting in now to UPGRADE your life, to bring meaningful change.

Expect growth.

Expect setbacks, and also expect fulfillment and joy!

The life you envision is built one intentional choice at a time—so choose wisely and watch your expectations blossom into reality!

You've got this!

If I can do it, you can do it too!!



Be of good cheer.
Do not think of today's
failures, but of the
success that may come
tomorrow. You have set
yourself a difficult task,
but you will succeed if you
persevere; and you will
find a joy in overcoming
obstacles.

Helen Keller

Gold Nugget

A gratitude walk is a mindful practice that combines movement with intentional reflection on the things you're grateful for. As you walk, you focus on the blessings in your life, whether big or small, and allow your mind and body to become grounded in the present moment. This simple activity can shift your perspective, uplift your mood, and reduce stress, turning an ordinary walk into a powerful act of self-care and positivity.

- Begin by taking a few deep breaths to center yourself. As you start moving, pay attention to your surroundings—the sights, sounds, and smells of nature or the environment around you.
- With each step, think of something or someone you're grateful for. It could be as simple as the warmth of the sun, the support of a loved one, or the opportunity to take this moment for yourself.
- Deepen your experience with essential oils. Apply grounding oils like Siberian Fir or Shin Rin Yoku before your walk to energize your senses. Inhale their uplifting aroma, and let them enhance your focus on gratitude.
- If you feel inspired, speak your thoughts of gratitude aloud or mentally repeat them as a mantra. By the time your walk concludes, you will feel lighter, more centered, and more connected to the beauty in your life.

Endnote



Now let's talk about some of the people I've mentioned in this book and delve into how their "stuff" influenced their behaviors.

My mother, Inga Mae, was born during the Great Depression. Before she was born, her father went to the bank only to discover that his life savings were gone. She was the seventh of ten children, and even though her entire community had been affected, it seemed her family was poorer than most. Growing up, as my mom put it, "there was no money." This was a painful and embarrassing experience for her, one that shaped her beliefs about her worth and carried on throughout her life. My mother always felt poor and less than her peers.

My mom's grandma, my great-grandma, was born in Sweden. I remember my mom telling me this story, which had been passed down to her by her mother: When my great-grandma, Inga Lisa, was a little girl, she had to walk to school through a forest. Sometimes it was dark, and she could hear wolves, which terrified her.

The family was poor, and her father died when she was ten. Her mother, Stina Lisa, worked as a seamstress to keep them alive. One day, there was no food, but Inga Lisa saw her mother take a crust of bread out of her pocket and nibble on it as she sewed. The hungry little girl told her mother she was mean for not sharing, and my great-great-grandma slapped her and said that if she didn't eat the little bread they had, she would starve to death, and wouldn't be able to keep either of them alive.



**There is a
crack in everything,
that's how the
light gets in.**

Leonard Cohen