the best you can be

A WOMAN’S GUIDE to Personal Growth

Introduction

A series of 12 lessons:

1. A Successful Woman
2. A Fulfilled Woman
3. A Spiritual Woman
4. A Focused Woman
5. A Supportive Woman
6. A Happy Woman
7. A Loving Woman
8. An Assertive Woman
9. An Organized Woman
10. A Patient Woman
11. A Victorious Woman
12. A Courageous Woman
INTRODUCTION

• *The Best You Can Be* gives practical suggestions on achieving your full potential. You’ll find sound advice on reaching your goals, enriching your spiritual life, and controlling negative emotions.

• You’ll learn how to communicate love and acceptance, inspire a desire for change in others, organize your home and time, and be more assertive.

• Personal growth exercises at the end of each chapter will enable you to put what you’ve learned into practice and get the results you want.

• Drawing principles from the lives of successful women and what they have learned in their own Christian experiences, Dorothy Eaton Watts and Joy Marie Butler will help you become the best you can be.

ABOUT THE AUTHORS

Dorothy Eaton Watts was a prolific writer and a Women’s Ministries (WM) director in the USA, including General Conference WM Director. She spoke at various women’s congressess, conducted seminars and workshops in the areas of devotional life, communication skills, creativity, success principles, classroom management, family life, and prayer. She left a wealth of material to bless women everywhere.

Joy Marie Butler has been speaking and writing to and on behalf of women ever since she began her ministry in Women’s Ministries in Sydney, Australia, in 1997. Since that time she has conducted hundreds of workshops, seminars, retreats, and programs for women throughout Australasia, Oceania and Africa. She is passionate about helping hurting women everywhere. She is an active member and officer in the World Woman’s Christian Temperance Union.

Dorothy and Joy met together on a number of occasions and decided that a set of Bible study lessons based on the book *The Best You Can Be* would be helpful for women worldwide. Dorothy encouraged Joy to do this, and this series of lessons is the outcome of that conversation. Joy’s dream and desire is that it will bring many blessings into the lives of women everywhere and that these blessings will extend to their families and communities.

SUGGESTIONS

For private study:

• Begin each study with prayer. Ask God to help you to understand the message of Scripture and to be able to apply it to your life.

• Read the Bible texts suggested carefully and slowly. Let them speak to your heart.
• Read the text provided in the lesson and do the suggested personal growth exercises. Take time to do this. Don’t rush.

• Apply the principles to your own life. Write out your plans to make the practical changes necessary.

• End with prayer, asking God again to help you put into practice all you have learned.

For group study:
• Before commencing the study, pray. The coordinator or group leader can do this.

• Hand out the lessons so that each person has a copy.

• Begin by reading the text on the lesson cover. Read together unison or ask one person to read. Compare various translations.

• The leader should lead the group through the lesson notes carefully, inviting questions or clarification as she proceeds.

• Allow time for all to complete the personal growth exercises in silence.

• Compare answers if the group is comfortable doing this. This can be a fun learning time.

• Encourage the group members to share with each other what they felt about the lesson.

• Encourage each member to apply the principles personally.

• End with prayer.

The Facilitator or Group Leader should:
• Create an unhurried atmosphere during the group’s discussion.

• Encourage the sharing of personal stories and experiences.

• Encourage and validate each person’s contribution to the discussion.

• Be comfortable with silence. Read the silence. Has the topic been exhausted? Has boredom stepped in? Find creative ways to revitalize the group through singing, getting up, or moving around.

• Monitor the time.

• Carefully invite others to pray.

• Invite a group member, or all the members, to read “My Prayer for Today” at the end of each lesson study.

You must learn the simple art of taking God at His word; then you have solid ground beneath your feet.  
My Life Today, 10
the best you can be

Lesson 1

A SUCCESSFUL woman

“I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me.”

Philippians 4:13, NKJV
BEING THE BEST YOU CAN BE

Throughout history there are stories of Christian women who have been successful in many ways. They are women from all parts of the world. Many of them initially were afraid, nervous, sick or enfeebled, yet they claimed the promises of the Word. They believed in God who made them as they were and went on to do great things, becoming truly successful in their sphere of influence.

In England, Catherine Booth, co-founder of the Salvation Army, was often sick and afraid to speak, yet she became a successful woman, leading a church with her husband. In America, Amanda Smith, born a slave and one of 13 children, became an internationally acclaimed missionary evangelist, preaching in England, India, Africa and other parts of the world. As a young girl, Ellen White was significantly injured and received little further education, but she became a proficient preacher and writer who influenced millions with her encouragement and books. Wangari Matthai, born to a poor family in Kenya, became famous as a campaigner for women and prisoners and for helping her nation to become environmentally aware and for helping save trees.

All these women’s stories are of spiritual triumph and success. They claimed the promise “I can do everything through him who gives me strength” (Philippians 4:13).

FIVE PRINCIPLES FOR SUCCESSFUL LIVING

1. There is a difference between worldly success and Godly success. Worldly success and self-esteem involves: possessions, performance, position, appearance, and people. True Godly success begins with that sense of worth and uniqueness which comes from our position in Christ. We are already special, created in His image, and loved with an everlasting love. Success, then, becomes striving to be all that God has already gifted me to become. Success means reaching my full potential in Christ Jesus.

2. I am somebody, a child of God, created in His image. “Before I was born the Lord called me; from my birth he has made mention of my name” (Isaiah 49:1). While I was still a microscopic cell, God arranged my DNA and lined up my genes and chromosomes to make me the special person that I am. There is none other like me among 7 billion people living on Planet Earth (see Psalm 139:13-16).

3. Jesus died to assure my success. Because of Jesus’ death, the wealth of the universe is mine. I am now a child of the King, a daughter of God. “I can do everything through him who gives me strength” (Philippians 4:13; see Joshua 1:8, 9).

4. God has a special plan for my life. “Not more surely is the place prepared for us in the heavenly mansions than is the special place designated on earth where we are to work for God” (E. G. White, Christ’s Object Lessons, p. 327). “You will go out with joy and be led forth with peace; the mountains and the hills will burst into song before you, and all the trees of the field will clap their hands” (Isaiah 55:12; see 60:1-3).

5. I don’t feel like a star. “High and low, rich and poor, all have a work to do for the Master. Everyone is called to action”
(E. G. White, *Selected Messages*, Bk 1, p. 266). If we, in faith, talk and act success, the feelings will come. That is one of the psychological rules of life. Positive feelings follow positive thoughts and positive actions. Remember Joshua and the children of Israel as they faced Jericho. God told them to go forth, face the enemy, and blow the trumpets. Success follows action.

All of us, as Christian Adventist women, can be winners, no matter where we were born or how much education we have. We can be women of excellence regardless of the mistakes we have made in the past or the problems we may face in the future. Despite suffering, abuse, setbacks, and handicaps, we too can achieve. It doesn’t matter what committees vote or what others think. We can receive a gold medal in living.

Each of us can have success beyond our greatest dreams, for God created us to be women of excellence. He made us to be winners! He is on our cheering team!

RATE YOURSELF

On a score of 1 to 5, rate yourself on the following characteristics of a woman of excellence. Five is the best.

1. Walks with her head up, giving a smile to each person she meets.
   
   1 2 3 4 5

2. Looks people in the eye when she speaks.
   
   1 2 3 4 5

3. Volunteers her name first in a new association.
   
   1 2 3 4 5

4. Receives a compliment graciously, always saying “Thank you,” but never playing down or playing up the value bestowed.
   
   1 2 3 4 5

5. Does not make excuses. Doesn’t put herself down, but talks affirmatively about the progress she is making.
   
   1 2 3 4 5

6. Dresses and looks her best at all times.
   
   1 2 3 4 5

7. Walks erectly and briskly but with relaxed yet rapid pace in public.
   
   1 2 3 4 5
8. Sits up front in meetings so she can exchange questions and comments with the speaker.

1  2  3  4  5

9. Gives her own name first when initiating or accepting a telephone call.

1  2  3  4  5

10. Seeks out women of faith and excellence as friends and role models.

1  2  3  4  5

PERSONAL GROWTH EXERCISES

1. Begin to appreciate the way God has made you. Fill in the following inventory:

   Three leisure-time activities I enjoy.
   Three things I do well.
   Three achievements in my life.
   Three positive adjectives that describe me.
   Three things I like about my body and the way I look.

2. Go back over your inventory and use it as an outline for a prayer. Thank God for each item on your list and for the unique person He made you to be.

3. Divide a sheet of paper into two columns. In the first column write the names of women in the Bible who project an image of success and high self-worth. Think of women who showed self-confidence and courage to become all that God had gifted them to become. In a second column, describe her actions.

As you read again through this lesson, think of women who were successful: in the Bible, from history, from the history of your church. Consider their secret for success. You will find that most had difficulty of some sort to begin with, but they pressed on, with Christ, to succeed. They spent time in the Word and in prayer, because they knew it was their source of power.

SUCCESS PRINCIPLE

Success is stretching toward my full potential through Christ, who enables me.

MY PRAYER FOR TODAY

Dear God, Thank You for difficulties and for the bad times because they turn me to You. I know that I cannot do anything without Your help. I claim the promises of the Word, and I ask You to help me to press on and never give up. I move forward in confidence because You created me for success.
Lesson 2

“A FULFILLED woman

“Then Peter said, ‘Silver and gold I do not have, but what I have I give you. In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, walk.’”

Acts 3:6
OFTEN DURING OUR LIVES, we try to live up to other’s expectations of us. We may even expect too much from ourselves at times. We can’t always do things perfectly or just right because we are human, with the frailties we are born with. The world is full of messages which sometimes make us feel inadequate. If we consider others to be more successful, we will always feel inferior or not good enough. We need to claim who we are in Christ and look at what God might expect from us. Let’s think more about this today as we contemplate what it really means to be a Fulfilled Woman.

Remember that God knows the situation we were born into and the talents He has blessed us with. Matthew 25:14-30 tells the parable of the talents. We are to use our talents to bless others and to bring praise and glory to God.

EXPECTATIONS FOR MY ROLE?

1. **Parents and Grandparents.** What role did they provide for us? We may want to emulate the role our parents or grandparents set, or we may not. We may be able to accomplish some of the goals they want for us, but not others. Be realistic about your own talents.

2. **Husband.** We can sometimes become frustrated trying to be everything we think our husband wants us to be. Or we can just relax and be the woman he loved and married.

3. **Church members.** Often we try to live up to the expectations we feel the church members may have for us. Sometimes the pressure becomes too much. On the other hand, it is important to be involved and to share one’s talents. Be comfortable setting limits on how much you can do.

4. **Children.** There is no way we can be all that our children may want us to be. We need divine wisdom to help us. And it is important to remember that our marriage partner is our first and foremost priority.

5. **Culture.** Cultural expectations vary around the world. Moving to another culture can change the expectations for ourselves and others around us. We need to learn to be culturally sensitive—always listening, learning, and being patient. Seek first to understand before being understood.

6. **God.** Trying to live up to the expectations of others around us can be very tiring and difficult. But what does God expect from us? Who does He expect us to be? What role does He expect us to fill?

THE G FACTOR

The G FACTOR (Gift Factor) is illustrated by the story of the beggar at the gate called Beautiful in Jerusalem. Two strangers, Peter and John, stopped and looked at him and gave him what they had, the gift of healing (see Acts 3:6).
We cannot give what we don’t possess. God does not expect us to give to others what He has not first given to us. As Adventist women, we are to share with people, not according to their expectations but according to the way the Lord has gifted us.

**GIVING WHAT I HAVE**

Operating by the G Factor is freeing. Using our gifts to bless others is so much easier when we remember we can only give what God has given us. I might not have the gift of singing or music, but I may have the gift of a listening ear or of laughter that I can give. God does not expect us to give what He has not given us.

**ESTHER’S GIFTS**

Once there was a woman so lovely that she won a beauty contest and ended up in the king’s harem. But Esther had more than beauty. She had a strong character and a love for the Lord and her people. She was willing to place all her gifts on the line. She understood that her gifts had brought her to the kingdom and “royal position for such a time as this” (Esther 4:14).

Could it be that we, as Adventist women, have also come to the kingdom for this hour in earth’s history? We each have gifts, abilities, and dreams. We have talents and opportunities. What are we doing with what we have? Consider: What gifts, dreams, friendships, and interests do I have? What will not get done in my corner of the world if I do not do it?

**RATE YOURSELF**

Below are a few of the gifts Adventist women possess. Check those that you have and are thus able to share.

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**PERSONAL GROWTH EXERCISES**

1. Can you think of a time when you got into trouble trying to live up to other people’s expectations?

2. Make a list of all the church offices you have held. Which ones were enjoyable experiences? Which were frustrating efforts? In which were you trying to give what you did not possess?
3. Read the parable of the talents in Matthew 25:14-30. Then make a list of your talents, gifts, and abilities. Try to think of at least 10 items.

4. Read the chapter titled “Talents” in Christ’s Object Lessons by E. G. White. What other talents does she suggest that you have not listed? Add them to your list now. What does she suggest you can do to increase your number of talents?

5. Choose one of your talents that you would like to see improved. How can you enlarge it? Are there classes you can attend, an online course you can take, books you can read, or someone you know who can help you grow in that area? Make a definite plan to strengthen and use that one talent. Take the first step this week.

6. Read 1 Corinthians 12, Romans 12, and Ephesians 4. Make a list of the gifts of the Spirit. Circle those that you think you have. Do you see relationships between your gifts?

7. If you have never taken a Spiritual Gifts Inventory, ask your pastor to give you one. Better yet, if possible, attend a seminar about spiritual gifts.

God has gifted each one of us with many talents. There are special gifts that only you have. Each one of us is unique, and when we use the special gifts that God has bestowed on us, we will be fulfilled. We need to cultivate those gifts and talents, using them to bring blessing to others and honor and glory to God.

SUCCESS PRINCIPLE

God does not expect us to give to others what He has not first given to us.

MY PRAYER FOR TODAY

Dear God, Thank You for the gifts and talents You have given me. I want to use them and multiply them for the blessing of other people and for honoring You. Please give me a willing and obedient heart to follow Your leading. Only in this way can I be fulfilled.
Lesson 3

“'The man without the Spirit does not accept the things that come from the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him, and he cannot understand them, because they are spiritually discerned. The spiritual man makes judgments about all things, but he himself is not subject to any man’s judgment: ‘For who has known the mind of the Lord that he may instruct him?’”'”

1 Corinthians 2:14-16
TO BE A SPIRITUAL WOMAN requires us to listen. To be quiet is the way to hear God’s voice speaking to our hearts and minds. God made us in His image, the Bible tells us, and that means we can be spiritual and can come close to Him. He has invited us to do this. God has invited us to come close by reading His Word, then listening to His small voice and talking to Him through the avenue of prayer. Many women in the past have experienced His closeness because they have done just that—read and prayed. When we do this, we will know the direction to take in our lives, and we will have compassion for those around us. To be spiritual is really the way that God designed us to be. Spiritual things are “spiritually discerned” (1 Corinthians 2:14). The guidelines in this lesson will help us understand this concept more fully.

NINE CHARACTERISTICS OF A GODLY WOMAN
Remember them by using the letters of the word SPIRITUAL as an acrostic.

S - SENSE OF THE ETERNAL.
A spiritual woman will have her priorities in order, understanding that only what she has done for Christ has lasting value. After an experience where God spoke to her soul very clearly, Amy Carmichael discouraged her mother’s attempts to buy her an evening dress. She says, “What are parties and fine clothes in light of eternity?” We may ask ourselves, “In the light of eternity, how important are some of the things on which I spend my time and money?”

Lord, give me a sense of the eternal. Help me get my priorities straight.

P - PRAYER IS IMPORTANT.
Prayer is vital to the life of a spiritual woman. To her, God is real, someone interested in all the circumstances of her life. Becky Tirabassi says she had very little time for God before she attended a prayer seminar. During one session, the speaker said, “Prayerlessness is a sin.” Becky was shocked and thought about how little time she had for God, yet she said she loved Him. Before the seminar was over, she developed a plan that easily takes her through an hour of prayer, Bible study, and meditation every morning. We could ask, “What in my life can be condensed or discarded so that I can spend an hour with my Lord each day?”

Lord, forgive me for the sin of prayerlessness. Help me find time to spend with You.

I - IMMERSED IN THE WORD.
To the spiritual woman, Bible study is not a tiresome chore, but one that she looks forward to with anticipation. She thinks, “What message will God have for me today?” Becky Tirabassi reads at least one chapter from the Old and New Testaments and one from Proverbs. Paraphrasing a verse of scripture helps Ione make it her own. Ruth Bell Graham leaves her open Bible on her table. She reads and memorizes verses, repeating them as she works and drives.

Thank you, Lord, for your Word. Help me plan a time every day when I can immerse myself in it.

R - RECOGNIZES THE IMPORTANCE OF SILENCE.
Godly women obey the command “Be still and know that I am God.” They take time not only to study and pray but also to listen to God’s voice. Amy Carmichael had the habit of spending long periods of quietness after Bible study and prayer. In times of solitude and quietness she and others have found inspiration, leading them to do mighty acts for God and humanity.
Lord, I want to be a woman who takes time to listen to Your voice. Help me learn how to enjoy solitude in the midst of my busy schedule.

I - INVITES JESUS TO WALK WITH HER IN ALL THE CIRCUMSTANCES OF LIFE.
The Lord walks with her through the tough as well as the easy times. Ruth Bell Graham talks about her life as a married yet lonely woman and mother of five. She admits to crying over her Bible as she sought to ease her loneliness and find answers to deal with the disappointment of having sons turn from the Lord. The promise “Have no anxiety....” became precious to her (Philippians 4:6).  
Lord, forgive me for worrying. Take from my heart the worry and concern, and may my prayers be thanksgiving.

T - TALKS EASILY ABOUT THE LORD AND HIS GOODNESS.
The spiritual woman is not embarrassed to give a testimony in church or to ask God’s blessing on her food in a restaurant. It is as natural for her to talk about Jesus as it is to talk about her children or a close friend.

Lord, help me to be like those women who fearlessly spoke up about you, to be so excited about the reality of my experience with You that I must talk about it.

U - UNDERSTANDS GOD’S CALL.
Great women of faith have always understood God’s call to service. They have sensed their place in the scheme of things, their part in God’s plan to save the human race. Many women have sensed God calling them to bless others, be a missionary, care for the sick, speak the message of Jesus, or have some other special ministry. When this happens, they cannot hold back and must go forward. Think of some women you know in this category.  
Lord, help me understand when You call me for a specific part of Your plan and make me willing to follow Your direction.

A - AWARENESS OF GOD’S PRESENCE.
The spiritual woman has a keen sense of God’s presence in her life. She is aware of what He is doing in the lives of her family, her church, and the political structures of the world. Through all the interplay of human events, she can see God’s hand at work. Ruth Bell Graham could have become discouraged about her sons, but she held firmly to her faith in God, recognizing that He was working in their lives. She says, “Our children can never outreach God’s reach.”

Lord, open my eyes that I might see Your hand at work in my life today. Help me never to forget that You are in control regardless of how things look.
**L - LOVES PEOPLE.**
A woman who is close to God inevitably finds herself loving all for whom He died, even the most unlovely. Amy Carmichael loved prostitutes. Mother Teresa loved castoffs of society, the destitute and dying. Mary Jo Copeland looked with compassion on the homeless. Chessie Harris loved neglected children and took in more than 800 foster children.

*Lord, help me be a woman stirred with compassion for the needs of people, willing to reach out to others with Your love.*

**RATE YOURSELF**

On a scale of 1 to 5, how would you rate yourself in the following areas of spirituality? Five is the highest.

1. My priorities reflect my sense of eternal values.
   
   ![Rating Scale](1 2 3 4 5)

2. Prayer is a vital part of my life.
   
   ![Rating Scale](1 2 3 4 5)

3. I daily immerse myself in the Word of God.
   
   ![Rating Scale](1 2 3 4 5)

4. I have discovered the transforming power of silence.
   
   ![Rating Scale](1 2 3 4 5)

5. I invite Jesus to walk with me through all the circumstances of my life, the tough times as well as the good times.
   
   ![Rating Scale](1 2 3 4 5)

6. I find it easy to talk about God’s goodness to me.
   
   ![Rating Scale](1 2 3 4 5)
7. I understand the particular plan God has for my life.

8. I am aware of God’s presence at work in my world.

9. I love people of all situations and cultures.

PERSONAL GROWTH EXERCISES

1. Give yourself the gift of solitude. Go away for several hours. Turn off your mobile phone and take no radio or iPod. Read, meditate on Scripture, contemplate God’s handiwork in nature, and be totally silent.

2. Plan a program for a “thoughtful hour each day in contemplation of the life of Christ” (E. G. White, The Desire of Ages, p. 83). Read one chapter of The Desire of Ages each day along with the scriptural passages on which it is based. Keep a notebook of your discoveries. Write out quotations that appeal to you. The 87 chapters will take you through three months of personal devotions.

3. For one month keep a diary of things that show God’s hand at work in your life. At the end of each day, write down all the evidences you have seen of His protecting care. Document answers to prayer. Write down news items that are a fulfilment of prophecy.

4. On Friday evenings write out a brief testimony of how God has blessed you during the week. What do you have to be especially grateful for during the past seven days? If the opportunity presents itself, share that testimony on Sabbath.

5. Choose a verse of Scripture that means a lot to you. Insert your name where appropriate. Rewrite it, showing what it means to you in your current circumstances. What message is God trying to give you?

It is truly beneficial to take time out to just focus on God and spiritual things. In all our busy-ness of life, we must take time to be quiet, to read, to pray, and to listen to the still small voice. It is from this quiet place that we can come out to share and really care for others. We will have energy and courage to do what God has directed us to do. We will truly be spiritual women.

SUCCESS PRINCIPLE

“But seek first his Kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well” (Matthew 6:33).

And remember, “Prayer is the key in the hand of faith to unlock Heaven’s storehouse” (E. G. White, Steps to Christ, p. 99).

MY PRAYER FOR TODAY

Lord God, I lay all my anxiety and troubles at your feet. I come to you quietly and in confidence. Please come into my heart and let me just bask in your presence and love. Help me to hear your still small voice speaking, and help me to go forward in faith believing you are there beside me always.
“...But one thing I do: Forgetting what is behind and straining toward what is ahead.“

Philippians 3:13
SOMETIMES IT SEEMS THAT we are all in a race to reach the finish line—of what? Our lives are often cluttered, hectic—with so much to do and so many tasks to accomplish. Many women go through life without any plan or goal. Researchers tell us that only 3% of us have definite, specific goals that are written on paper, goals that can be seen and measured. Only 3% of us know where we are going and will likely to succeed in getting there.

Our God is ordered and focused. We can see this in Creation. Each day was divinely appointed and planned. At the end of seven days there was a perfect world with two perfect people. All of Creation testifies to a God of marvelous order. If we look at a flower or leaf under a microscope, we can see wonderful intricacies.

The Bible says, “God is not the author of confusion but of peace…” (1 Corinthians 14:33, NKJV). In Psalm 199:133 I find a prayer that God will direct my steps.

Who wants to run a race without a finish line? We must know where we’re going, or how will we ever get there? We can be like caterpillars on the rim of a round flowerpot, following each other around and around until they starve to death. Like the caterpillars, we can confuse activity with accomplishment. We are all busy. The question is, what are we accomplishing? Without definite written goals, we can easily get involved in circular activity that achieves nothing of lasting value. Activity does not lead to accomplishment until it is focused on a specific goal.

LINE OF SEPARATION

What is it that separates women of excellence from women of mediocrity? Think of women in your nation who have become women of excellence. What made the difference?

It is not time. Dr. Ida Scudder, founder of Vellore Christian Medical School in India, lived with the same time constraints as we all do.

It is not family responsibilities. Ellen White, who had more than 50 books to her credit, faced the problem of juggling career and family needs in days that were no longer than ours.

It is not our race. Marian Anderson struggled against racial prejudice yet became a woman of excellence.

It is not beauty. Eleanor Roosevelt admitted to feeling like an ugly duckling, but she accomplished much.

It is not handicap. Joni Eareckson Tada writes books and paints pictures despite the fact that she is a quadriplegic.

What makes the difference? It is having a cause, a destination, a goal, a purpose. When we know where we are going and are determined to get there, it is possible to find a way to succeed regardless of the obstacles in our path.

Many women in their 60s and 70s have gone back to school, graduating with high marks and gone on to live many more years—working, earning, learning, and travelling. It is never too late to have a purpose, to set goals. It is never too late to become a woman of excellence, to realize the dream of a lifetime.
POWER OF WRITTEN GOALS

There is power in writing down our goals. Something mysterious happens when we write them down. Power is released, and things start to happen.

Women with goals:

- Helen Keller was blind and deaf, yet she graduated from college and became known around the world.
- Florence Nightingale was able to do much for the cause of nursing because she had a vision.
- Joan of Arc’s name is remembered more than 500 years later because she had a goal.
- Mother Teresa would not have received the Nobel Peace Prize had she not had a mission.
- Golda Meier, Margaret Thatcher, and Indira Ghandi all became leaders of their nations because of goals.

John Maxwell suggests these as the six stages in accomplishing a goal:

I thought it. I caught it. I bought it.
I sought it. I got it. I taught it.

“Not that I have already obtained all this, or have already been made perfect, but I press on to take hold of that for which Christ Jesus took hold of me. Brothers/sisters, I do not consider myself yet to have taken hold of it. But one thing I do: Forgetting what is behind and straining toward what is ahead, I press on toward the goal to win the prize for which God has called me heavenward in Christ Jesus” (Philippians 3:12-14).

RATE YOURSELF

What are some of the hindrances you have faced in reaching the goals of your life? What has kept you from being all you could be? Please check those that apply to your situation.

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<tr>
<th>Hindrances</th>
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<td>Insufficient education</td>
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<td>Uncooperative spouse</td>
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<td>Racial discrimination</td>
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<td>Negative family upbringing</td>
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<td>Got in with wrong crowd</td>
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<td>Chose wrong profession</td>
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<td>Family responsibilities</td>
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<td>Substance abuse</td>
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<td>Unsympathetic boss</td>
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<td>Limited family support</td>
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<td>Physical handicaps</td>
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<td>Shyness</td>
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<td>Lack of connections</td>
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<td>Bad luck</td>
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<td>Illness</td>
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Now go back and put a big, bold X through the whole list. Difficulties are no reason to give up on your dreams. It isn’t the circumstances of life that make us winners or losers, it is how we react to the circumstances. It is not what we have that determines our success; it is what we do with what we have.
MY GOALS FOR THIS YEAR
List at least one for each area of your life.

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<tr>
<th>AREA</th>
<th>GOAL</th>
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<td>Church/Community</td>
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PERSONAL GROWTH EXERCISES

1. Use a calendar to set your goals for the next month. When will you do each? How will you achieve it?

2. Use a weekly calendar or a journal to set your activities for the week. Make sure that weekly goals help you reach monthly and yearly goals. Review the list daily.

3. Make a list of your daily priorities. What will you do today that will move you toward your goals? Put those things at the head of your to-do list.

4. Assemble support material for each of your goals. Have a file for each goal. Into each put clippings, articles, books, CDs, estimates, brochures, samples, and other items that will help you reach the goal.

5. Reward yourself for accomplishing your goals. Celebrate each achievement.

6. Pray about your goals. Psalm 37:4 says, “He shall give you the desires of your heart.”

SUCCESS PRINCIPLE

Activity does not lead to accomplishment until it is focused on a specific goal.

MY PRAYER FOR TODAY

Lord God, Thank You that I can trust You because You are a God of order. I can breathe and live because You planned and provided for me before I was even born. Help me to emulate Your goodness. Help me to focus and prepare in advance to the best of my ability, by Your grace. Help me to accomplish all that You desire for me.
“Beloved, let us love one another, for love is of God; and everyone who loves is born of God and knows God.”

1 John 4:7, NKJV
WOMEN NEED WOMEN, and everyone needs a supportive friend or two. Without someone we can trust, we can shrivel up and die. God made us to live together in peace and harmony and to support one another. Sin marred this ideal, yet as Christians in a community of forgiveness and love, a supportive network can be created.

Anne Sullivan was an unwanted, unloved, and blind teenager. Her mother had died, her father had deserted her, and her only brother died while they were in a miserable orphanage. All alone, she retreated into herself. In anger, she kicked and screamed when people came near. Her caregivers labelled her as mad. However, a kind nurse loved and supported her and won her confidence. In time Anne Sullivan became Helen Keller’s teacher and helped her overcome the isolation of blindness and deafness. Both Anne and Helen knew what it was to be supported by a caring friend.

God’s Word says, “Dear friends, let us love one another, for love comes from God. Everyone who loves has been born of God and knows God” (1 John 4:7).

Mother Teresa is an inspiration to many. She helped thousands of poor people, but she was able to do this only because she had a supportive network of helpers.

Many famous women have done great things for humanity but they do not do it alone. They have created a large network of supporters around them. No woman is an island. We do not and cannot walk alone. We cannot achieve success alone. None of us live to ourselves, accomplishing everything on our own (see Romans 14:7).

SIX LEVELS OF A NETWORK

Today we often hear the word network. This refers to a person’s CIRCLE of contacts. This circle consists of six recognizable levels of association:

**Level 1 - Very close friends.** These are people we share with at an intimate level the deeper things of our souls—our hopes, fears, joys, and concerns. We may have only two or three friends at this level.

**Level 2 - Good friends.** These are people (perhaps 12-20) we see often because we enjoy being with them. We eat, party, talk, travel together. We share but not as intimately as with those at Level 1.

**Level 3 - Casual friends.** In this group (50-100) are our neighbours and church family. There are warm feelings when we meet; we share many of the same experiences but not our close feelings.

**Level 4 - Work associates and extended family.** We see these people on a daily basis in connection with work or school, or occasionally at family gatherings.

**Level 5 - Faraway friends.** These are people who have moved from the inner circles of our network toward the outer edge. Either they or we have moved. We exchange letters, emails.
Level 6 - Acquaintances. These are people we have met; we know their names and a little about them, but we don’t really count them as friends. The number in this group may be in the hundreds or even thousands.

Church growth experts tell us that 85% of members baptized in the church come from among our personal networks. They also tell us that a new member needs at least seven close or good friends within the church if that new member is to remain. We need each other, we depend on each other, and women especially need other women as supportive friends.

SIX HABITS TO EXPAND A NETWORK

1. **Experience doing.** She expands her network by learning new skills through classes, workshops, seminars, sports, church work, or community activities.

2. **Risk linking.** A woman of excellence seeks out ways to meet new people, especially those who are successful. She will risk linking with others.

3. **Show belonging.** The successful woman gets involved. She shows that she belongs by participating in sponsored activities and showing her enthusiasm. She is a booster for any group she joins.

4. **Blessing through gifts.** The woman of excellence uses her gifts to bless others. By finding a need and filling it, she draws people and success to her doorstep.

5. **Finding a mentor.** The aspiring woman finds a mentor, a successful woman or women, who can help her become a woman of excellence. A mentor gives wise counsel, listens, assists, and shares.

6. **Sharing what she knows.** The successful woman shares what she knows with others. She looks for opportunities to teach, share, write, lead a seminar, or simply talk with a friend.

In Titus 2:3,4 we read, “Let the aged women... teach the young women” (KJV).

Women need women. Many hurting women are in our churches and communities: grieving women, abused women, battered women, forsaken women, addicted women, lonely women. There are many needs, needs that only another woman can fill. Wonderful things happen when women begin to support one another. Miracles occur when women begin to expand their networks.

RATE YOURSELF

On a scale of 1-5, rate yourself in your use of the following methods of expanding your network. Five is the best.

1. The successful woman seeks new experiences, learns new skills, and enjoys gaining new information.

   1   2   3   4   5

2. The woman of excellence risks connecting with people and organizations.

   1   2   3   4   5
3. The successful woman becomes part of a group by participating, cooperating, and expressing enthusiasm.

4. The woman who is a winner shares her talents. She seeks a need; then tries to fill it.

5. The woman of excellence finds a mentor to help her succeed.

6. The successful woman looks for ways to share her expertise with others.

PERSONAL GROWTH EXERCISES

1. Think of the biggest achievement of your life. Write that achievement at the top of a sheet of paper. Under it make a list of all the people who helped make it possible. Then take a moment to thank the Lord for the network of friends who helped you achieve.

2. Draw a small circle in the center of a sheet of paper. Surround it with five concentric circles. Let each circle stand for one level of your personal network. Label the circles. Write the names of at least three people who fit into each circle.

3. Make a list of women who have served as your mentors. What is one thing you learned from each woman?

4. Make a list of women for whom you have been mentor or coach in some aspect of life. What did they learn from you?

5. For the next month ask God to lead you to a woman for whom you can support and with whom you can share something God has taught you.

SUCCESS PRINCIPLE
We cannot be successful alone. What we become depends a great deal on the people in our personal networks.

MY PRAYER FOR TODAY
Dear God, You made me for fellowship and company. We need each other and a supportive friend or two. Thank You for my friends who support me. Please help me to be a supportive friend to someone who needs a listening ear and a caring heart. When I need someone to bless me, please guide me to those who would be my true friends. Thank You for Jesus, my very best friend and chief supporter.
“You will show me the path of life;
In Your presence is fullness of joy,
At your right hand are pleasures forevermore.”

Psalm 16:11, NKJV
THERE ARE MANY THINGS in life that can take away our happiness and steal our joy. But we can make a choice whether or not to allow this to happen to us. We can choose to be happy and find our peace and joy in knowing and trusting God. At times we will need to consult a professional person to help us make those right choices, but at every turn we can trust God to see us through. In this lesson there are practical guidelines to help us understand how to be happy. As you read and follow the suggestions, let your happiness flow. Determine to be positive, not negative.

God’s Word says, “You make known to me the path of life; you fill me with joy in your presence, with eternal pleasures at your right hand” (Psalm 16:11).

Bianca Rothschild had every reason to be unhappy and bitter. At the end of World War II, she was the only survivor from a large family. All the others had died in concentration camps. She herself had suffered greatly—broken ribs and wrist, mangled leg, back injured when a guard stomped on her with his heavy boots. During one air raid, she ran outside and prayed for a bomb to kill her. When she finally survived, she wondered what purpose God had for her. One day she read, “We have a right to the joy of giving so others may receive. We can give material things, we can give moral support, we can give a friendly ear, and best of all, we can give love.” She chose the way of love, asking God to help her. After the war she moved to the USA where she became the “Sunshine Lady” in her community, sending hundreds of get well cards to sick people in her town and beyond. She chose to be happy and positive, rather than bitter or negative.

Sometimes the circumstances of life hang over us like a dense fog. Do we have no control, no choice? Why do we so often get off course? What keeps us from being happy and positive? How can we stay on course and not be negative?

FOUR BIBLICAL PRINCIPLES

1. **God understands our feelings.** Jesus faced similar trials. He longed for human acceptance. He suffered emotional pain, injustice, rejection, loneliness, and grief. He cried. (See Hebrews 4:15; John 11:35.)

2. **Contact with God transforms negative emotions.** Jesus has a balm for every emotional sore spot. He can give us joy for our depression and peace for our pain. He can give love for our hatred and relief for our bitterness. He has hope for our despair and acceptance to apply to our low self-worth. (See Isaiah 61:3.)

3. **God can supply our emotional needs.** Many women have struggled for years, trying to do and be everything. They have searched many sources but found no emotional fulfilment. Only God can supply all our needs, the emotional as well as the physical. He can husband us and supply us with love, acceptance, comfort, and security. (See Philippians 4:19; Isaiah 54:5.)

4. **Feelings follow actions.** Positive feelings follow positive actions. We can ask the Lord to replace our negative feelings about a person or a situation with positive feelings and love. Then we can step out in faith. (See 2 Chronicles 20:20-22.)
SIX WAYS FOR TURNING SADNESS TO JOY
Suggestions for coping with emotional pain
and loneliness:

1. **Nature.** Walk in nature and talk with God. Learn to identify birds and plants. Breathe deeply.

2. **Singing.** Sing praise songs, prayer hymns, or add your own words to familiar tunes.

3. **Helping others.** Visit others worse off than yourself. Visit the sick, the old, and shut-ins. Let them know you care.

4. **Exercise.** When angry or depressed, walking and other exercise can boost your mood.

5. **Learning.** Take the focus off problems by learning something new. Enroll in a class or study on your own.

6. **Journaling.** Write out prayers. Insight and strength often come when we write our thoughts.

The story of Corrie Ten Boom is a wonderful example of what God can do with our negative emotions. Whenever she thought of the cruel guard at the Ravensbruck concentration camp, she felt hatred and said, “I can never forgive him.” But eventually God spoke to her heart and told her to write to him. Deciding to obey God and try to forgive, she wrote that letter. However, to become seeing the former guard in person two years later was very different. After she had spoken to a large crowd, he came forward to speak to her. He stuck out his hand and said, “Fine message. How good to know that all our sins are at the bottom of the sea.” Instantly she recognized him and was horrified. He did not remember her but she remembered him. He asked for forgiveness for the cruel things he had done. She prayed silently, not wanting to shake his hand. But she thought she could at least begin the process by lifting her hand. As she did so, God supplied forgiveness which flowed through her.

RATE YOURSELF
Below is a list of NEGATIVE emotions. Put a check beside those you are feeling now or have felt recently.

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<tr>
<td>Frustration</td>
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<td>Rage</td>
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<td>Jealousy</td>
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<td>Pessimism</td>
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<td>Anxiety</td>
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<td>Discouragement</td>
<td>Depression</td>
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<td>Regret</td>
<td>Shame</td>
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<td>Guilt</td>
<td>Grief</td>
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<td>Bitterness</td>
<td>Low self-worth</td>
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Following is a list of POSITIVE emotions. Which ones do you feel in particular need of at the present time?

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<tbody>
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<td>Love</td>
<td>Understanding</td>
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<td>Peace</td>
<td>Forgiveness</td>
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<td>Joy</td>
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<td>Self-control</td>
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<td>Adventure</td>
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PERSONAL GROWTH EXERCISES

1. Search for Bible verses that promise the very positive emotions you need. Look up the promises in various versions. Type or write out these promises on cards and put them in strategic places where you can read them often.

2. Try paraphrasing Bible promises. Put your name in the verse at appropriate places. What message is God giving you in that verse? Write in your journal what you hear Him saying to you.

3. The Psalms are full of references to emotions. Read through a psalm, underlining negative emotions in one color and positive emotions in a contrasting color.

4. Choose an incident from the life of a Biblical woman. Read of her experience in Scripture and in E. G. White’s writings. Try to imagine the emotions she was experiencing in that situation. How would you have felt if you had been in her shoes? How did she deal with her negative emotions? What can you learn from her experience?

5. Read chapter “Rejoicing in the Lord” in Steps to Christ, by E. G. White. Make a list of positive actions we can take when dealing with negative emotions.

SUCCESS PRINCIPLE

With God’s help we can choose to replace negative emotions with positive ones.

MY PRAYER FOR TODAY

Dear Heavenly Father, Thank You for happiness. Thank You that You are interested in my happiness and want me to live in Your presence where there is fullness of joy. Help me to live in that knowledge and banish the negative thoughts that sometimes plague me. Lord, let nothing steal my joy and peace. I choose today to trust You and to accept the happiness You offer.
“And people don’t hide a light.... You should be a light for other people. Live so that they will see the good things you do and will praise your heavenly Father in heaven.”

Matthew 5:15,16 (NCV)
THERE ARE MANY STORIES told of people who came to know and love Jesus because of the kindness and love shown to them in a time of need. Strangers to a new country need love, sick neighbors need love, struggling families need love, widows need love, young people and children need loving and attentive mature people in their lives. There are many categories of lonely or sad people who need loving friendship, and you might be the person who can show them love. Loving, kind, and compassionate people draw others to Jesus Christ. Truly caring for others is the best and easiest way to win people for Christ and the heavenly kingdom.

A young woman who had arrived in a new country, lonely and afraid, found a job working for a Christian family. They loved her, provided for her, and demonstrated God’s love. They gave her a Bible to read in her own language. As she read the Bible, she said, “The story of Jesus is so beautiful.” Because of this family’s love, she became a Christian.

The Bible says, “Men do not light a lamp and put it under a basket. They put it on a table so it gives light to all in the house. Let your light shine in front of men. Then they will see the good things you do and will honor your Father Who is in heaven” (Matthew, 5:15, 16, NLV).

It can be our goal—to be the woman who is so loving and compassionate that others will be drawn to Jesus Christ. How can I communicate that love? Let’s discuss this.

THREE WAYS LOVE LISTENS

James 1:19 says, “...Everyone should be quick to listen, slow to speak....” Listening is one way to show love. Most of us are not very good listeners. But we can learn how to listen well.

1. **Body Language** - Experts say that 90% of our communication is through body language. We often say one thing but mean another, and our body language shows it. A good listener faces the person who is speaking. She maintains an open posture, with arms and legs uncrossed. She leans forward slightly and maintains eye contact at the level of the other person.

2. **Open Questions** – Asking open questions will accomplish more than closed questions. Open questions ask for reasons, opinions, thoughts, feelings, and explanations. They allow the person to share while you listen. By contrast, closed questions ask for facts and require merely a yes or no answer. They stop people talking.

3. **Reflective Listening** – Often the one speaking has an idea and tries to express it, but it may not always come out right. The reflective listener will check back to make sure she got the right message. She will reflect what the speaker may mean. For example, “I hear you saying...” and waits to see what response comes. Love listens, hearing not only the words but the feeling behind the words. Love takes time to check if the message received is the one given.

Consider the Bible story of the woman taken in adultery (see John 8:1-11). Love was demonstrated in the way Jesus dealt with this woman. The Pharisees came scolding, condemning, punishing, blaming, and shaming. Jesus communicated love. He accepted and forgave. He treated her with dignity and respect. He gave her courage.
THREE ROADBLOCKS TO EFFECTIVE LISTENING

1. **Judging.** Includes criticizing, blaming, shaming, labelling, name calling. Jesus said, “Judge not” (Matthew 7:1, KJV).

2. **Sending solutions.** Includes ordering, commanding, demanding, preaching, moralizing, advising.

3. **Avoiding the other’s concerns.** Includes diverting, distracting, arguing, reassuring, changing the subject.

LOVE IS VULNERABLE

Jesus gave up His high position to come and be as we are. He became approachable, and thus opened Himself to attack. He made Himself vulnerable, able to be hurt and rejected. Love strips away our pride and makes us approachable, willing to show our humanity.

LOVE ENCOURAGES

Let us encourage one another (see Hebrews 10:25). Voicing our appreciation is the most effective way to encourage someone. It is simply doing what God did for His Son at the Jordan River (see Mark 1:11).

Think of a time when you were encouraged by someone in your family, church or community and how this helped you. Think of a time when someone showed you true love—acceptance, compassion, care, and a listening ear. How did this affect you?

Let us be loving women wherever we are. Let us be like Jesus.

RATE YOURSELF

On a scale of 1 to 5, rate yourself on the following ways of communicating love. Five is the highest.

1. love listens not only to a person’s words, but to the meaning and feeling behind the words.
   
1 2 3 4 5

2. A good listener faces the speaker, keeps body in an open position, and maintains eye contact.
   
1 2 3 4 5

3. A good listener asks more open questions than closed questions.
   
1 2 3 4 5

4. Love overcomes the judging roadblocks.
   
1 2 3 4 5

5. Love overcomes the sending solutions roadblocks.
   
1 2 3 4 5

6. Love overcomes the avoiding the other’s concerns roadblocks.
   
1 2 3 4 5

7. Love becomes vulnerable. It makes us open, honest, and human.
   
1 2 3 4 5

8. Love encourages by voicing appreciation.
   
1 2 3 4 5
PERSONAL GROWTH EXERCISES

1. On the blank beside each statement below, identify the type of roadblock it represents. Is it 1-judging, 2-sending solutions, or 3-avoiding the other’s concerns?
   — That was a stupid thing to say.
   — You just want to look good.
   — You’d better do it, or else.
   — You really ought to try it.
   — You usually have good judgment.
   — Stop it right now!
   — That’s just like a man!
   — You’ll feel better tomorrow.
   — There is one logical conclusion.

2. Find an opportunity to engage someone who is merely an acquaintance in conversation. The object is to keep the conversation going for a minimum of four minutes, the time it takes to make a friend. It is a real challenge for some people to cross the four-minute barrier. Use open rather than closed questions.

3. Let today be Affirmation Day. Find at least ten people to whom you can voice honest appreciation. You may do this in person, on the phone, via email, Facebook, or a handwritten note. At the end of the day, make a list of the people you encouraged.

4. Create an Alphabet of Love. Write beside each letter a description of what love is.
   
   A - affirming, B - beautiful, C – caring, and so on through the alphabet.

As you complete this lesson, think about your activities as a Christian woman. Do you radiate the love and happiness that Jesus gives you? Are you able to share this with others? Can you find ways to do this? Ask the Lord to help you become a more loving and compassionate Christian.

SUCCESS PRINCIPLE

L — Listening
O — Overcoming roadblocks
V — Vulnerability
E — Encouragement

MY PRAYER FOR TODAY

Gracious and loving God, I come to You today asking for more love, for more compassion—to share with others. Help me to live so close to You that I will radiate the love and joy You bestow on me. I want people to know You as their Savior and Friend because I have shared Your love with them. Thank You.
Lesson 8

AN ASSERTIVE woman

“Blessed are you when people insult you, persecute you falsely and say all kinds of evil against you falsely because of me.”

Matthew 5:11
ALL THROUGH LIFE WE FACE difficulties and disappointments. That is part of the sin factor and we can’t avoid it. But we can decide how to respond. We can choose to be better or bitter in response to our circumstances; it is our choice. When we know Jesus and serve Him, our attitudes will define who we really are, and we can stand strong in the face of trouble. This lesson will explain just how we can do this.

In the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus teaches us how to live. These chapters in Matthew provide the guiding principles for your life today and always. “Blessed are you when they revile and persecute you, and say all kinds of evil against you falsely for My sake. Rejoice and be exceedingly glad, for great is your reward in heaven, for so they persecuted the prophets who were before you” (Matthew 5:11, 12).

Think carefully about what this text is saying, and resolve to rise above the difficulties that might be thrown at you. Be strong and assertive in the face of difficulty and opposition. Jesus is with you.

Mary Slessor, a 19th Century missionary in Africa and the first woman magistrate in the British Empire, was an assertive woman. She was courageous and did not run away when there was trouble. Even at 16 years of age, she stood up to a gang of boys threatening to stop her Sunday school class. Later she stood up to angry African chiefs who planned to poison many villagers. She managed difficult people and conflict very well.

Three ways to handle conflict are FIGHT, FLIGHT, or FOCUS. The best way is focus. It brings conflict into the open, it expresses feelings, it allows the other person freedom to help resolve the conflict. Focus messages make room for a solution.

**BIBLICAL EXAMPLES**

Queen Esther illustrates these three ways to handle conflict:

- **FIGHT** - Haman decided to fight Mordecai. He chose force to deal with Mordecai.

- **FLIGHT** - Haman’s relationship with the king is an example of flight. When the king sent him to lead Mordecai through the streets, he meekly submitted to the king’s wish, all the time hating it.

- **FOCUS** - Esther used the focus message in her relationships. She confronted the king, she asserted herself, and used the right technique to solve the problem and eliminate conflict.
MODERN EXAMPLES

During church, the people behind you keep talking quite loudly, distracting you from the sermon. How might you resolve the conflict?

• FIGHT - Turn around and snarl at them, “Don’t you have any respect for others? If you want to talk, you should leave.”

• FLIGHT - Get up and leave yourself. Go to another spot in the church. Or just ignore the problem and hope it will go away. It won’t.

• FOCUS - Smile sweetly and say, “Your talking disturbs me because I am unable to hear the preacher.”

THREE PARTS OF A FOCUS MESSAGE

It is plain to see that a focus message is smarter than either fight or flight reactions. How do we give a focus message? What ingredients should a focus message have?

• Describe the behavior. Give a nonjudgmental description of the behavior that is upsetting you. Do not blame or call names. Simply state the problem clearly in an objective way.

• State your feelings. Describe how the behavior makes you feel. Tell your feelings. Be as accurate as possible. Don’t say you are a little upset if very angry is how you really feel.

• Show the effect. Give a clear statement of the concrete and tangible effect the behavior has on you. Do not give the solution to the problem. Give the other person individual freedom to do whatever he or she wishes about the problem.

What do you do if someone does not accept your focus message, but argues and fights back instead?

It is very important to stay in control of the situation. Wait until the person is finished. Try reflective listening skills. Let the person know that you heard them, then repeat your focus message calmly and clearly. Keep focusing on the problem. Don’t get sidetracked, and don’t attack the person.

THE SERMON ON THE MOUNT

In Matthew 5:39-42, Jesus is teaching the concept of taking control of a conflict situation instead of allowing it to control you. He tells us to turn the other cheek, go two miles instead of one, and give more than is asked of us. But isn’t this asking too much, asking us to be a doormat, allowing people to walk all over us?

Jesus was saying, “Don’t fight when you come into conflict. Don’t submit; don’t run away. Stand and face the person and confront them. Take charge of the situation. Say, ‘Ok, if you want me to go one mile, I’ll make the decision here. I’ll go two miles. Do you want my coat? Ok, I can do better than that. I’ll give you my cloak as well.’”

The Christian way of dealing with interpersonal conflict is not fight. It is not flight. It is confrontation for focus.
RATE YOURSELF

Rate yourself on the following assertive skills. One means you have low satisfaction with your skill in that area. Five means you are completely satisfied with your performance of that skill.

1. **Use feeling talk.** You are comfortable in giving your personal feelings about a subject.

   1    2    3    4    5

2. **Talk about yourself.** You are able to share your accomplishments with others.

   1    2    3    4    5

3. **Make greeting talk.** You can initiate a conversion without apology or embarrassment.

   1    2    3    4    5

4. **Accept compliments.** You can accept compliments graciously instead of disagreeing with them, or playing them down.

   1    2    3    4    5

5. **Disagree when necessary.** You do not pretend to agree just to keep peace. You disagree graciously, but clearly.

   1    2    3    4    5

6. **Ask for clarification.** Rather than being confused about what someone has said, or about directions they have given, you ask him or her to restate or explain.

   1    2    3    4    5

7. **Speak up for your rights.** You do not let others take advantage of you when you feel put upon. You can say no without feeling guilty. You can ask to be treated with fairness, for example, when someone cuts in line ahead of you. You can register complaints calmly.

   1    2    3    4    5

8. **Avoid justifying yourself.** You are comfortable with your values and don’t have to justify your actions and feelings.

   1    2    3    4    5
PERSONAL GROWTH EXERCISES

1. Practice making focus messages in the following situations:
   - Your assistant, who promised to do something for you at church, doesn’t show up and you are left with the responsibility.
   - Your husband leaves his dirty clothes all over the floor.
   - Your neighbor plays loud music every night.

2. Think of three current conflicts you are experiencing. Write out some possible focus messages you could use in dealing with them.

3. Make a list of feeling words. Try for 100. Rate them as strong or weak feeling. In focus messages it is important to state correctly the degree of feeling.

Remember that Jesus is always with you, and His promises are sure. “Do not fear, for I am with you; be not dismayed; for I am your God. I will strengthen you and help you. I will uphold you with my righteous right hand” (Isaiah 41:10). “I will be with you; I will never leave you nor forsake you” (Joshua 1:5).

SUCCESS PRINCIPLE
The secret of conflict resolution is not fight or flight, but focus.

MY PRAYER FOR TODAY
Thank you, God, for Your presence in my life. Thank You for troubles that come my way because they help me focus on You and gain the strength I need for every trial. Help me never to forget Your promises that You will never forsake me and will always be there. I will go forth in Your strength and stand firm. Please be with me. I praise You and thank You.
“Let all things be done decently and in order.”

1 Corinthians 14:40
THE UNIVERSE DEMONSTRATES that God is a God of order. He brought something beautiful out of chaos in making our world, and He keeps it functioning in the most amazing way. When we read even small amounts of science literature and look at detailed nature pictures, we are thrilled at how beautifully organized everything is and how it keeps running smoothly—all because God made it that way. We are able to breathe and live because God is organized. If it were not so, we would not be here. It is our privilege to cooperate with God. We are stewards of the earth and of our homes. To have a happy, well-functioning family and home, we need to be organized. This lesson will provide some wonderful suggestions and tools. When we are organized, we will have more time to spend with Jesus, which in turn will make us quieter and able to hear that still, small voice guiding us all the time.

The Bible tells us that God is a God of order. The Creation story demonstrates this. The building of the Mosaic Sanctuary also bears witness to orderliness. Proverbs 31 describes an extremely organized woman as a role model. The Bible says, “Let all things be done decently and in order” (1 Corinthians 14:40).

Once we recognize the importance of being organized, we can find many materials to help us. We can read about women who, through God’s grace, changed their ways and became organized. Emilie Barnes, Robyn Pearce, Lissanne Oliver wrote about their experiences and provide us with inspiration and guidance to be well organized. In the 21st Century, books, Internet blogs, YouTube tutorials, and other materials abound to help us eliminate clutter and become organized.

We will look at 10 tools for organizing TIME and 10 tips for organizing SPACE. Some of these can be condensed, and a computer can take the place of many items. Select the system that works best for you.

ORGANIZING MY TIME

1. Learn to say no. The woman of excellence knows that she must say NO to the good so that she can say YES to the best.
2. To-Do list. Time taken to do this is not wasted. Make lists of things to do. Make more lists.
3. Set deadlines. Try to meet self-imposed deadlines. Hurry through chores and spend more time doing what is pleasurable, such as reading, walking, or spending more time with the children.
4. Rewards. Reward yourself for projects completed. Allow yourself a treat when each is done.
5. Calendar. Record all appointments, schedule plans for projects and activities, including time for relaxation.
6. Journal. Our spiritual journey does more than anything else to help us keep our priorities straight. A journal is not a diary with its brief record of events. It is a place to write our thoughts, prayers, and ideas; a place to write goals for the year, for a month. Often our outer world may be chaotic, but a journal can help keep our inner world focused and calm.
7. Tickler file. Have a file with sections for every month for dates bills are due and for time-sensitive information.
8. Book of lists. Record anniversaries, birthdays, payments sent and received, ideas, stories and talks given, lists of books read or yet to be read.
9. **Message Center.** Tack notes to a bulletin board or attach them with magnets to the refrigerator for your family to see.

10. **Job cards.** Using index cards, write on each your committee appointments, writing projects, and other things to be done. Include details of measurements, supplies needed, and deadline date. When the job is done, throw away the card.

**ORGANIZING MY SPACE**

1. **Keys.** Have a special place for keys. This saves time searching.

2. **Greeting cards.** Have a box for cards for birthdays and other occasions.

3. **Addresses and phone numbers.** Keep this information in a book or on computer. Keep it up to date.

4. **Gift Box.** Keep a few gift items tucked away to be ready any time.

5. **Warranties and guarantees.** File all such items in one place.

6. **Kitchen cupboards.** Remove all old dishes, tins, and unneeded items. Give or throw them away.

7. **Clothes closets.** At least once a year or each season, sort your clothes. Are they old, worn, wrong size, never worn? Give them away or toss.

8. **Storage.** Use boxes—cardboard or plastic—to keep like items together. Label the boxes.

9. **Filing cabinet.** This is a wise investment. Develop an easy-to-use filing system. Use it. File at least weekly. Periodically toss outdated items.

10. **Sanctuary.** Assign one place to keep your Bible, notebook, lesson quarterly, and other items you use for personal devotions. Schedule daily quiet time there.

**RATE YOURSELF**

Rate yourself in each skill. One means you are very poor. Five means you are completely satisfied with how you are doing.

1. **Using time effectively.** Do you get 60 minutes’ work out of each hour?

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2. **Planning.** Are you able to develop a course of action to accomplish a specific objective?

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3. **Controlling paperwork.** Do you maintain the flow of communications: letters, bills, cards, and so forth that come to your desk?

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4. **Finding things.** Can you locate information, tools, and materials quickly when they are needed?

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5. **Delegation.** Are you able to organize so that others can share in the work and you are not left doing everything yourself?

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6. **Pacing your energy use.** Are you able to pace yourself so that you can complete a day without fatigue?

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7. **Concentration.** Are you able to stick with a given task?

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8. **Setting priorities.** Do you do the important things first?

1 2 3 4 5

9. **Memory.** Do you have a system to help you remember important incidents, ideas, plans or promises?

1 2 3 4 5

10. **Clutter control.** Are you able to keep a clean, neat house, garage, yard, or workspace?

1 2 3 4 5

**PERSONAL GROWTH EXERCISES**

1. Following are specific areas that often need organizing in a home. Circle or mark the areas that need work in your situation.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>keys</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>addresses</td>
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<tr>
<td>gift box</td>
<td>warranties</td>
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<tr>
<td>kitchen</td>
<td>clothes closet</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>linen closet</td>
<td>garage</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>storeroom</td>
<td>tools</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>drawers</td>
<td>filing</td>
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<tr>
<td>books</td>
<td>sanctuary</td>
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2. Choose one of the spaces that you marked. What materials do you need to begin working on it? Assemble what you need to make a start. Do one area at a time.

3. Which of the 10 tools for organizing time would be helpful to you? Decide on one of them. Buy what you need.

**SUCCESS PRINCIPLE**

The successful woman takes control of her time and her environment.

**MY PRAYER FOR TODAY**

Dear God, I want to be more organized. I thank You that You show us Your wonderful plan in making our world and putting it all together so perfectly. Thank You for making me and for the beautiful way my body is put together in such an orderly fashion. Help me to take care of my environment and myself so I can glorify You in everything I am and do. Help me to clear the clutter from the space where I live and work. Also to clear the clutter from my mind, so that I can concentrate on Your goodness and plan for my life.
A PATIENT woman

“‘Martha, Martha,’ the Lord answered, ‘you are worried and upset about many things, but few things are needed—or indeed only one. Mary has chosen what is better, and it will not be taken away from her.’”

Luke 10:41, 42
THE STORY OF MARY AND MARTHA has many lessons for us. If we read this story with open minds and hearts, we can learn many good things, including how to be a patient woman (see Luke 10:38-42).

This story has been told for centuries. These two women represent the world of women who have very different personalities. Jesus loved both women. They were like family to Him, and He showed them respect and compassion. If we read the story carefully, we can see how Jesus taught Martha to be patient, to be quiet in her heart, and to spend more time listening than being busy or even talking too much. It also teaches us to be considerate of others by accepting them for who they are and doing our best to support them.

Think about Martha. She was a woman who had more to do than she could possibly get done in one day. Think about her experience when Jesus came to visit—how anxious she was to please. Yet her sister Mary appeared to be lazy. Perhaps Martha thought, “What a lazy sister I have. I wish she were more like me—hardworking, busy, organized, dependable. I wish she would change.”

In contrast, consider Mary. She concentrated on what Jesus said while sitting at His feet absorbing the lessons He shared. She was not even aware of Martha’s frustration. So Martha became impatient and interrupted the conversation, asking Jesus to tell Mary to come and help her.

Others were displeased with what Mary did at the feet of Jesus. That time she anointed His feet with expensive perfume at the dinner given in His honor following the resurrection of Lazarus (Matthew 26:6-13; John 12:1-7).

Look at the disciples. They were indignant, but didn’t notice how Jesus felt. They probably thought, “Look at her as a servant at His feet! She should be more aware of social appropriateness. And she has no concept of the value of that needless action.”

Listen to Judas Iscariot. He complained, “What a waste of costly perfume. The money for this could have been used to help the poor.” But he didn’t really care about the poor. He probably thought, “She should be more like me—shrewd, careful, a wise investor, intelligent, good with money.”

God created each of us as unique individuals. People’s temperaments and personalities differ widely. Reading about the different personality types can help us better understand ourselves and be more patient with those of different temperaments.

We should not be impatient with those who do not have the same temperament as ours. Life will be pleasanter when we learn to accept and appreciate other people for what they are—special in God’s sight.
ACCEPTING PEOPLE

Just because people are different from us—in habits, ideas, personality or beliefs—doesn’t make them wrong. The way we approach life, our particular temperament and personality, is related to our DNA (a molecule called deoxyribonucleic acid - DNA, which contains the biological instructions that make each species unique), the very genes that God put together in us. When we realize that we are not responsible for the way other people are or behave, it takes a lot of pressure off. It is liberating to realize that God created us as unique individuals, and we don’t have to conform to someone else’s ideas, but neither should we expect others to conform to ours.

ACCEPT, BELIEVE, COMMIT

We may tend to be critical of others, but there are steps we can take to become less judgmental. Above all, we need to look to Christ as our example.

Jesus ACCEPTED Mary just as she was, with her weaknesses and her strengths. He loved her completely.

Jesus BELIEVED in Mary and could see the hope and beauty inside her. He was positive.

Jesus COMMITTED her to God. Jesus lifted her from despair and ruin. He prayed for her.

Think of experiences in your life where acceptance and love have helped, have saved the day, or have turned people to Christ.

RATE YOURSELF

Suppose the social committee in your church is planning a big picnic that will include food and games. What part would you like to have in the picnic? Choose which part you would feel most comfortable in.

1. **Picnic coordinator.** You are the one in charge. You organize everything, telling everyone what to do. You are responsible to see that all runs smoothly. You might even umpire one of the games.

2. **Player in a game.** You want to be right in there with everyone else playing the game, whatever it is—softball, football, tug-of-war, soccer, or hockey. You like to hear the cheers of the crowd as you play the game well.

3. **Food committee.** Or any other committee. You like to work behind the scenes, attending to all the details that help to make the picnic a success. You are pleased to prepare food, make posters, send out invitations, buy supplies, or plan a game the children could play.

4. **Cheering section** - You bring your own mat or chair to sit on and are happy to sit on the side, watching the others work and play. You are part of the cheering crowd, enjoying yourself as you sit back and relax.

WHICH TEMPERAMENTS DESCRIBES YOU?

1. If you chose picnic coordinator, you are likely to be a CHOLERIC personality. You like to get things done .... now! You are energetic, dynamic, hardworking,
disciplined and well organized. A sense of being in control of a situation is very important to you.

2. If you picked player, you probably have a more SANGUINE temperament. You like people and action, and like to be noticed by others. You like people to cheer you and laugh at your jokes. Being around people gives you energy. Having lots of friends is important to you.

3. If you chose the food committee, you are likely to be a MELANCHOLY personality. You are someone who enjoys attending to details. You want things done right and are happy to work in the background to make the program a success.

4. If you decided on the cheering section, you probably have a PHLEGMATIC temperament. You would rather be in the audience, sit back, relax, and enjoy the experience from the sidelines. You are steady, dependable, and easy to get along with.

PERSONAL GROWTH EXERCISES

If you have never taken a temperament test, contact your local mission, church pastor, or Women’s Ministries director. Someone there may be able to give you a test or tell you about a coming seminar or workshop where you can take the test. This will help you understand yourself better and make you more understanding and patient with others.

You may also enjoy reading one of the many books about personality types.

SUCCESS PRINCIPLE

The most successful way to facilitate change in others is the ABC model:

A - accept them  
B - believe in them  
C - commit them to God

MY PRAYER FOR TODAY

Dear patient God, Help me slow down, quiet my mind and heart, and listen to You and others. Help me to accept others when they don’t agree with what I say or do and to be ready to hear their opinions and ideas. Forgive me for being anxious and angry when others do things differently than I would. Help me to understand that You have made us all unique and that is okay. Thank You for Your limitless patience with me. Bless me with patience and acceptance of others.
“But the Lord is faithful, and he will strengthen you and protect you from the evil one. We have confidence in the Lord.... May the Lord direct your hearts into God’s love and Christ’s perseverance.”

2 Thessalonians 3:3-5
THE BIBLE IS FULL OF STORIES of apparent defeat which often turn into victory. History is also replete with such stories from every nation. Your family may have its own stories to tell of discouragement and what seemed like failure that turned into happiness and victory. Perhaps your own life will testify to similar events with happy endings. God has promised us victory. And we can look forward to that glorious, victorious day when Jesus comes to take us to our heavenly home.

This promise gives us confidence and can help lead us to victory. “But the Lord is faithful, and he will strengthen and protect you from the evil one. We have confidence in the Lord that you are doing and will do the things we command. May the Lord direct your hearts into God’s love and Christ’s perseverance” (2 Thessalonians 3:3-5).

When we look back on our lives, we can see how God has led and blessed us. At various times in our experience, we may not see the way ahead. Disappointments and sorrows may overwhelm us. But it is our reaction to failure and the bad times that can help make us victorious and courageous women. Through bad times we can learn lessons of dependence upon God, the power of prayer, and the strength of love. The bad times can make us bitter or better people.

SAYINGS THAT CAN HELP US

• “Success is the flip side of failure.”

• “Success is failure turned inside out, the silver tint to the clouds of doubt.”

• “Don’t give up. Learn from each failure, and you will have success. God has not called you to failure, but to success.”

• “When the going gets tough, the tough get going.”

• “If at first you don’t succeed, try, try again. ‘Tis a lesson all should heed, try again.”

• “Anything worth doing is worth doing well.”

• “There’s no shame in failing. The shame is in not learning from your failures.”

WHAT TO DO WITH FAILURE

1. **Acknowledge it.** Stop trying to excuse it. Because of sin, all human beings experience failure. No one is perfect. Confession of our failures allows for the grace of forgiveness and the opportunity for change.

2. **Thank God for it.** Defeat often shows us our inability to do the will of God without His aid. When we let go and let God, He can often work miracles for change. Then we can look back and say “Thank you, Lord, for the miracle you wrought.”
3. **Learn from it.** We learn by the things we suffer. We gain experience from failure and learn how to avoid it in the future. Be open to new ideas or suggestions.

4. **Use it as a stepping stone to success.** Sometimes we weep and pray over apparent failures, but they can be times of learning and improvement if we hold onto our confidence in the way God has led us. God will make the way clear. Success will come.

5. **Overcome it.** All failure is not sin, but all sin is failure. If sin is our problem, then by the grace of God we can overcome. The methods are:
   - **SCRIPTURE** - ‘It is written,’ said Jesus.
   - **HOLY SPIRIT** - Jesus gives us the Spirit for the battle against sin.
   - **PRAYER** - True prayer takes hold of God and gives us the victory.
   - **SINGING** - It is one of the methods Jesus used, and it is a powerful tool for women today.
   - **MINISTRY OF ANGELS** - We should not overlook the ministry of angels.

6. **Transform it.** It is possible to turn a defeat into victory. Sometimes all that is necessary is just a change of the way we look at things. The successful Christian woman will see a possibility in every failure. She will seek, by God’s power, to transform that failure into success.

Many stories abound which testify to what women have done when failure occurred in their lives. Success and good came from their apparent defeats. Share your story. You can be a victorious woman by God’s grace and your constant dependence on Him.

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**RATE YOURSELF**

On a scale of 1 to 5, rate yourself in the way you deal with failure and disappointment. Five is the best.

1. I acknowledge my mistakes and take full responsibility for my failures. I confess my sins.
   
   1 2 3 4 5

2. I am able to learn from my failures.
   
   1 2 3 4 5

3. I consistently thank God for my disappointments and failures.
   
   1 2 3 4 5

4. I use each failure as a stepping-stone to success.
   
   1 2 3 4 5

5. I am using all the agencies God has provided to overcome sin in my life.
   
   1 2 3 4 5

6. I have transformed each failure of my life into an opportunity.
   
   1 2 3 4 5
PERSONAL GROWTH EXERCISES

1. Divide a sheet of paper into two columns. In the first column make a list of three major failures or disappointments in your life. In the second column write down at least one thing you have learned from each experience.

2. Look up the following texts. What does each one tell you about what to do with failure? Jude 24; 1 John 1:9; Philippians 3:13,14; 4:13; Proverbs 28:13; 1 Corinthians 15:57; Isaiah 61:3; Romans 8:28.

3. “As the world’s Redeemer, Christ was constantly confronted with apparent failure,” writes Ellen G. White. How did He deal with these discouraging circumstances? Read pages 678, 679 of The Desire of Ages. Find four ways Jesus dealt with failure.

4. Collect biographies of people who have taken failure and turned it into an opportunity for success. An example is Think Big by Ben Carson, M.D.

SUCCESS PRINCIPLE

With God’s help every failure can become a stepping-stone to success.

MY PRAYER FOR TODAY

Dear Father and Friend, You are the One who understands. You are the One who guards and guides and gives us victory. It is only by Your grace and power that I can possibly hope to succeed in this life. Thank You for being my provider for everything. Thank You for giving me victory in all circumstances. When I fail and am discouraged, help me to always trust You and to remember Your promises to always be with me.
A COURAGEOUS woman

“I will be with you; I will never leave you nor forsake you.... Be strong and courageous. Do not be afraid; do not be discouraged, for the Lord your God will be with you wherever you go.”

Joshua 1:5, 9
THE MOST FAMOUS AND SIGNIFICANT story in the Bible about courage is found in Joshua 1. Here are words spoken by God to Joshua when he began his leadership role after Moses died. It is a wonderful story of encouragement for everyone. Promises taken from Joshua 1:5,6,7,9 say, “I will be with you; I will never leave you nor forsake you. Be strong and courageous…. Be strong and very courageous…. Be strong and of courageous; do not be afraid; do not be dismayed, for the Lord your God will be with you wherever you go.”

These words have given many people encouragement as they faced difficult situations. They have encouraged women to speak up when they have been afraid to do so. They have encouraged mothers to stand firm with their children when dangers have come. They have encouraged women to preach when they have been hesitant to do so. They have encouraged young people to take a stand for the right when tempted to do wrong. They have encouraged missionaries to go to dangerous places. They have encouraged disabled people to move ahead and accomplish great things. Today we will take these words to heart and memorize them, never to forget them.

Sometimes we are afraid to venture out, to try something new, to take a risk. Often this is because we have experienced deep disappointments or failures in the past. What holds us back from achieving a lifetime dream? What keeps us from boldly stepping out to claim success? Why don’t we have the courage to be all that we can be?

FEAR HOLDS US BACK

We may be afraid of pain, embarrassment, the unknown. We may be afraid of what people might say or worried about losing a relationship. We may be scared of making a mistake, of failing. It takes courage to rise above these fears, to walk boldly on in spite of the fear in our hearts. One writer defines courage as “fear that has said its prayers.” Another suggests that courage is simply “fear holding on a minute longer.” Courage is an act of the will—a choice on our part to go on, to take a risk regardless of our fear.

SUCCESSFUL WOMEN ARE RISK TAKERS

Every successful woman has been willing to risk failure that she might gain success. A list of courageous women might include Mary Slessor, a brave missionary to Africa; Elizabeth Fry of England who helped women prisoners; Florence Nightingale, the first nurse; Catherine Booth who helped found the Salvation Army; Amelia Earhart, famous woman pilot; Ellen White, pioneer and God’s messenger for the Adventist church; Joni Eareckson Tada, paraplegic preacher and writer. These are all women who could have chosen to travel life’s flat, broad highway where they would
be comfortable and safe. Instead they chose to hike a new trail. The path they travelled was uncomfortable at times, risky, and unpredictable. Their way was uncertain and uncharted, but the scenery was exciting! These are women who were unafraid to use their talents and who risked succeeding, despite their handicaps.

DEFINITION OF COURAGE

Courage is demonstrated in many ways. It can be seen in the face of one who is struggling with cancer; in the eyes of another who struggles to carry on after the death of her companion for 40 years; in the forgiveness of one whose husband has been unfaithful; in the devotion of a woman pastor as she obeys God’s call in spite of prejudice; in a woman who tries single-handedly to raise three children and keep food on the table.

- Courage is asking for ginger ale when everyone else is drinking beer.
- Courage is choosing to give 110% to make a marriage work.
- Courage is seeking counsel to overcome the abuse suffered in childhood.
- Courage is daring to reach out to neighbors with God’s love.
- Courage is sometimes walking out of a destructive relationship.
- Courage is saying NO to the good in order to say YES to the best.
- Courage is refusing to listen to gossip about a friend.
- Courage is confronting a friend who has wronged you.
- Courage is showing kindness to an enemy or daring to be honest with a friend.

HOW TO HAVE COURAGE

1. Talk courage. Research tells us that the words we speak have an impact on the functions of our bodies. It is obvious that we need to control the language we use on ourselves. Our words affect our thoughts and even our bodies. At the time of the “Great Disappointment” when the Millerites were expecting Christ’s return, the people were discouraged when Jesus did not come as they expected. But one brother kept saying, “Courage in the Lord,” until every face was aglow and the people praised God.

2. Praise God. One writer tells us that if more praising of God were done, hope, courage, and faith would increase. This has been proven over and over again.

3. Have faith in God’s promises. Stories in the Bible remind us to trust God’s promises. Ellen G. White tells us to have faith in God because He knows our need and is full of compassion.

4. Accept the gift of the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit is given to us who are fainthearted, to strengthen us and impart courage.

Say this to yourself and others: “I believe that God is just as willing to gift me with courage as He has done for others. By His grace and power I can become a courageous woman.”
RATE YOURSELF

Check the areas of your life in which you feel a need for courage at the present time.

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<th>Health</th>
<th>Career</th>
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<td>Finances</td>
<td>Church Work</td>
<td>Witnessing</td>
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<td>Parents</td>
<td>Talents</td>
<td>Temptation</td>
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<td>Trials</td>
<td>Recreation</td>
<td>Habits</td>
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<td>Conflict</td>
<td>Grieving</td>
<td>Principles</td>
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<td>Future</td>
<td>Dreams</td>
<td>Education</td>
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PERSONAL GROWTH EXERCISES

1. List the risks beginning with speaking in public. All of us face small risks every day, things that we are afraid to do. Which of the following are risks for you? Speaking in public. Meeting a stranger. Asking for something. Offering advice. Making a phone call. Praying in public. Arguing a grade. Interviewing for a job. Learning a new skill. Sending off a manuscript. Standing up for a friend who is being gossiped about. Telling someone to go to the end of the line.

2. Decide to take at least one small risk every day for a week. Ask God to help you do what is difficult for you. Claim the following promises to give you courage: Philippians 4:19; Isaiah 41:0; Joshua 1:9; Psalm 27:1.

3. Read “Call to Travel” in Life Sketches by E. G. White. Note how afraid she was to risk telling her experience as the Lord instructed her.

SUCCESS PRINCIPLE

The courageous woman follows the GIRAFFE PRINCIPLE—you have to stick your neck out if you want to reach your goal! We can do this by God’s grace and with His Spirit.

PRAYER FOR TODAY

Dear God, Thank You for Your promises that tell me You will be with me. Thank You for the encouraging words I read in the book of Joshua. Help me to write them in my heart and mind, and help me to recall them whenever I am afraid or nervous. Give me a strong and courageous heart to step out in faith, trusting and knowing that You will always be there. Help me to speak up for the hurting. Help me to touch with love all those who seek direction and help. God, grant me a full measure of Your Holy Spirit today and every day.