

Set Your Soul on Fire for God With These Practical Suggestions

When I turned 40 years old, I decided I wanted to do something outside my comfort zone. I should be not only something that is memorable but something that should have an impact on the next 40 years. I wanted to attempt a feat that I was afraid of and land on the other side of it, not wanting to go around it but run right to it and through it.

Since driving down the highway with a wasp in the car didn't seem like a safe option, I decided to go to my next fear: climbing up a pole—a very small telephone pole, 30 feet high. And then stand straight up, waiting for what I was sure would feel like an eternity and for a partner to come stand next to me, and we'd then jump off together.

I did it! And I have climbed the same 30-foot pole in Arizona approximately 10 more times since that initial jump. Even though I have done the feat quite a few times, my hands still shake, my knees still get weak and my stomach still has major butterflies—every single time. The difference is I know that I know I can do it.

One of my favorite sayings about fear is this: “Fear makes the wolf bigger than he is.” When you live in fear, everything is larger than life. Every 30-foot pole seems like a skyscraper. Every fish seems like a shark. Every cloud seems like a major thunderstorm. I choose to look fear straight in the face and say, “You will not paralyze my heart or my mind.” Courage teaches our fear a lesson. Trust me.

I've learned that every time I practice courage, I gain confidence. Every time we look fear in the face and move forward in spite of it, we build a memory in our minds and in

our hearts. Courage is a muscle that strengthens every time we use it, and when we add a new memory of courage, here is what that memory tells us: "You have been here before. You lived through this. And you can do this again."

How would it feel if you were to begin your own chapter of courage today and give yourself something to reference tomorrow? You may be facing different circumstances, but the story is the same. God is bigger than any shark, skyscraper or storm. And hopefully with courage you will be walking toward it, not running away from it. The beauty of it all is we don't even have to fight our own battles—someone else is. And in that we can relax.

Do you have a dream or a passion but are afraid of failure if you reach for it? Let me give you a couple of practical suggestions: try writing down three attainable goals for the year. Then write down three goals that are so big you think that they are probably unattainable. Write down something that makes you want to leap out of bed in the morning and something that keeps you awake at night with excitement.

It could range from something small, such as taking art lessons, all the way to starting the process of adopting a child. No goal is too small or too big if it's something burning in your soul. So many things seem impossible until you get on the other side, and then you realize that they were simply opportunities disguised as impossibilities.

Writing down these goals and taking about them may help materialize them—and how wonderful if it helps you release the fear of failure. Each month revisit the goals you wrote down to see how far you've come and what more you can do to achieve them. Just one small step can be the key to keeping you moving forward, free of irrational fear.

You can be an amazing mom, an outstanding wife or a dedicated employee. You can be all of these and yet still have God-given

dreams. He made you and gave you your talents and desires for a reason. Start with one goal, one dream, one thing that brings you joy and watch yourself come alive again.

✖ Adapted from **The Kindness Effect** by Jill Donovan, copyright 2018, published by Charisma House. This book shows what happens when you give generously to others, pursue your dreams, and never give up. To order your copy click on this link.

Prayer Power for the Week of July 15, 2018

This week, as you face each day, allow the Lord to help you conquer whatever fear you are facing. Thank Him that what is unknown to you is known by Him, and He already has the right outcome for you. Ask for His guidance in writing down and achieving your God-given goals. Continue to pray for more workers for His harvest, the peace of Jerusalem, wisdom and godly counsel for our leaders and world-wide revival. Read 1 Thessalonians 5:17, 1 Timothy 2:8, 1 John 4:18.