

Heroes In Heels

Ignite Your Soul and Awaken the Hero Within

A 30-DAY JOURNEY

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With Contributions
by Pam Rundquist

DEDICATION

*T*his book is dedicated to all the heroic women who, through their loving support, elevate and enrich the lives of others. Thank you for your love, courage, selflessness, and determination. May this book provide inspiration and an awakening to all the women still on their journey to find the Hero within.

AUTHOR'S NOTE

*T*hroughout this book are stories from women sharing personal extraordinary moments and experiences with other women. All the contributors have granted permission to use their stories in this book. Some names have been changed by request to protect individual privacy.

I am profoundly grateful to these women who put their trust in me to share their unique and intimate experiences. I was touched by every story that found its way to me and felt deeply inspired by the love and support that was given by each woman in these beautiful moments.



FOREWORD

It is better to light a candle than to curse the darkness.

~ Anonymous

A pivotal moment in my garage forever changed my life. The unexpected but extraordinary event was the day I experienced a genuine awakening.

I had just dropped my three children off at school and was on automatic pilot driving up Discovery Way, the street where I lived. Just as I had done a thousand times, I pulled my big red Expedition into the garage of my comfortable suburban home and slowly removed the key from the ignition. But this time, instead of getting out of the car, I sat frozen. It seemed as if, for a brief moment, the world stopped. I felt paralyzed as I sat staring through my windshield into an empty, dark, garage wall. The quiet still-small voice in my head spoke loud and clear, posing the question that would unexpectedly re-shape my life. “How did I get here?” Not “How did I get into my garage?” but “How did my life get to this place?” Like most women, I was incredibly busy with all the details and demands that I had created and

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accepted through the years. I loved my life and being a mom more than anything in the world, but somehow, somewhere along the way, I found myself lost – and, amazingly enough, I was lost within my own life.

I had everything that should make me happy, I thought. I enjoyed the many roles and titles I had been called through the years: wife, mother, daughter, sister, friend, coach, assistant, art lady, neighbor, co-worker, and obedient church member, to name a few. The process of losing myself transpired slowly, one title and one small demand or acquired duty at a time. In retrospect, the more titles and responsibilities I attained over the years, the more I disconnected from my true authentic self. Like millions of other women, I struggled to be everything to everyone in my life. At the same time, I found myself trapped in a world of unforeseen contradictions. Now, at this stage of my life, I was tremendously overwhelmed, but bored by the daily routine. I was married, but I felt painfully lonely. I suffered from exhaustion, but often felt preoccupied and apprehensive. I was a “Supermom,” but I was running on a tank that was super-empty. Like so many, I was “religious,” but not “spiritual.” In every snapshot that showcased our home, I smiled broadly, but I frequently cried alone in the bathtub at night.

On that day, in my dark garage, for whatever reason, all these contradictions abruptly came to light, suddenly, and right out of the blue. There I was, sitting in a parked car, my life a confusing mess. Like an overflowing river bursting through a worn-out levee, a flood of tears began to pour out of me, as the uncomfortable truth could no longer be ignored or denied. Simply stated, I became conscious of the bitter fact that, behind all the roles and responsibilities, I truly had no idea who I was anymore. Even worse, I realized I was sleepwalking through my own life.

As I began to share this “ah-ha” moment with my family and friends, I came to the conclusion that quite a few of the women I knew were paralyzed with similar feelings. We were all running in a multitude of directions, so much so that we struggled to find time to share a cup of coffee with each other or carve out an hour to simply take a short walk together. Regrettably, though we were

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always running, we rarely seemed to be running toward our own personal joy and fulfillment.

With this new awakening and blossoming awareness, I began the uneasy search to rediscover my life. I read and listened to any and all experts who offered insight into how to get my life back. The process was exhilarating. Each “master” offered remarkable advice and direction on how to find what I was urgently searching for: ME!

As best I could, I applied each expert’s strategies and tools with dedication and passion and began to feel a new strength and energy within. When I finished reading one book, I immediately moved to another, and then another. Soon, I was combining various techniques to live a purpose-filled, passionate, and fulfilling life. Finally, I found the right combination of key components that I could practically and consistently incorporate in my challenging schedule. In doing so, I not only re-connected with my soul, I discovered a new and authentic life purpose.

During this extraordinary process of awakening and re-claiming my life, it was the women in my life who made the most profound impact on my evolution, both positively and negatively. I was genuinely inspired by, and grateful for, the strength, support, and love that were freely given by many remarkable women. (My true Heroes in Heels!) Conversely, I was disillusioned and saddened by some women who tried to devalue me for daring to want more. I was completely taken aback by hurtful gossip and judgment fed to the community about me as I made the terrifyingly difficult and necessary changes (including leaving my marriage) to achieve the happiness and fulfillment that my soul desperately needed. This experience, though extremely painful, taught me important and invaluable lessons about friendship and women. The truth is that we all have an impact on the women with whom we come in contact and with those we have close relationships. Whether we choose to be an empowering or demeaning influence, we make a difference in all our relationships.

What follows in these pages is the culmination of knowledge and life skills I have learned, applied and been helped by in searching for my own authentic self. This book honors all the heroic women who, day after day, continuously travel life’s

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unique and challenging journey with all the titles and responsibilities borne valiantly, but who, like me, may have lost their authentic and purposeful life somewhere along the way.

With all my heart I believe women need to come together as one. To reach our fulfillment we must consciously stop backstabbing, judging, and gossiping about each other. We must intentionally dare to show love for each other. Never before in history have women taken on so many roles and have had such demanding lives. More importantly, it's now our responsibility as women to pull together, love each other, support each other and embrace each of our unique and remarkable life missions.

The examples in this book are from ordinary women sharing extraordinary experiences. In their own moments of heartache or challenge they found miracles in the faces of women who stepped up to be their guardians. It is within these small but decisive moments that true heroes are made. With each opportunity, these courageous women reached greater heights, choosing the unrivaled and oftentimes more difficult path. To find and use their light, they had to look inward. So it is with you and me.

It is with great joy that I invite you to share this journey. I hope your heart will be touched, that you will be challenged to live more passionately, and feel inspired to reach out to empower yourself and those around you.

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