



*Elaine Curry*

*The Art of Living*

LESSONS FOR A  
LIBERATED LIFE

A real life guide to a healthy  
mind, body, heart and soul

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# Foreword

## Why you should read this book

Elaine, popular transformation and performance coach, knows that you can create the life you want and love, following your dreams and goals. Unwind and enjoy this book that will give you a new lens on life as Elaine shares many secrets of wellness and living well with purpose. With her training and education in Psychology, Sociology and Health & Social Care this led Elaine to a career in the Voluntary and Community Sector where she provided effective support, development and management to a board of directors, employees and senior management. She found her talents of fundraising, strategic planning, project development, executive coaching and people management.

During her working life, Elaine continued to study and became an NLP Practitioner in 2014, giving her an excellent ability to communicate with others with an essential mindset for business and life. She progressed in her career with additional training in leadership, mentoring, facilitation, supportive living, mental health promotion and life coaching. With extensive and advanced experience in the Third Sector, she specialises in executive coaching for the community and voluntary sector, taking people's visions to reality.

Maybe you are stuck in situations with high stress, experiencing depression, have adopted bad habits or keep finding incompatible partners, get into unhealthy relationships, or have a poor love life, weight or health problems, maybe conflicts with family, or finding it hard to forgive, always living in the past, just feeling exhausted or battling challenges daily?

Elaine will energise and inspire you. She is sharing all her experiences, insights and useful exercises that will support you to master your life and your dreams through essential personal life lessons. This book includes many of Elaine's personal challenges and experiences with practical tools and expert information that led her to generate her life full of joy.

Elaine's mission is to empower people around the world to take charge of their life, love, relationships, health and happiness by boosting their skills, addressing their beliefs so they can live a liberated and meaningful life. Elaine encourages you to get back your life, to make the right choices, to take chances, to take control of your life and change your life story to enjoy living well. Reading this book will give you a better mindset, re-evaluate your choices towards becoming the best version of YOU.

You will find this book very empowering, motivating and amazing self-awareness exercises that delve into areas of your shadow self that maybe you may have never explored or thought mattered until now. The book is easy to understand, and you can apply these lessons to your everyday life for you and others. Maybe just a few of these hidden lessons are what you need to change your life and turn it around right now.

When you finish the book, you will feel inspired, grateful. Get ready to take real action with this great resource and real-life guide to living well.

**Teresa Hawley Howard**  
**Best Selling Author**  
**Women on A Mission**

# Preface

## **Why I wrote this book**

In recent years we have seen many therapies and practices with neuroscience, psychotherapy and enhanced spiritual practices. We can sincerely say we are in a mindfulness revolution and I think it is essential that we have a combination of body, mind, body, soul practices and integrated habits for sustained happiness, health and well-being.

As a personal life and professional coach, I want to empower, liberate, inspire, transform and elevate you. I am sharing all my experiences and insights to support you so that you can liberate your life through essential personal life lessons and self-discovery exercises.

You may experience mental health disorders, relationship break-ups, domestic violence, trauma, family issues, unhealthy relationships, bad habits, health challenges, loss of a job or other significant changes in your life. With this book, I outline valuable life lessons to give you the reader a different lens on dealing with your life challenges, with a sense of hope when at times you may feel worn out or confused on where to get help.

I assure you all my experience, personal development, achievements and failures mean big lessons. Lessons that I wish were given to me many years ago in this exact format and this real-life guide and formula for living well. My lessons made me think, act and behave differently to become more content, thriving and liberated woman. This book full of lessons is highly important to me in turning my life around and transformational, building strong resilience to bounce back after many challenges.

With my wealth of knowledge overcoming my health challenges; understanding the ripple effects of divorce and the emotional imbalance that unhealthy relationships bring; the modern-day relationship scene, the secrets of lasting love and the power to bring up emotionally intelligent children, these are only a few highlighted areas covered.

I will guide you to think positively, to see life challenges as personal growth and that trauma or adversity is your pathway to self-empowerment. Surviving traumatic experiences means that you survive because the fire that is inside you burns a lot brighter than the fire around you. I want to share with you all my deepest secrets to true love and living a great life full of happiness, concentrating on the way to best way to find love. Building healthy relationships can be so powerful - mentally, physically and emotionally for you. Don't let past scars define you, destroy you or defeat you, let them strengthen you.

In return for my time, my research, my lessons and my self-development, I can give you the pleasure of this transformational book. By changing my thoughts, my feelings, my actions and my behaviour, I changed my life and my destiny. If you want to change your life for the better, you certainly can - living your life with unconditional love, happiness, joy, self-acceptance, self-respect, self-belief and freedom. The changes you want in your life can start right away if you believe in yourself and your capacity to move forward. Break the chains and liberate your soul.

## **About me and my learnings**

I have worked since I was aged twenty-three with the third sector, charitable organisations developing and managing health and well-being programmes, supporting healthy ageing. Majority of my work focused on addressing life inequalities, and I successfully developed effective strategic plans and new interventions to encourage active and healthy living resulting

in successful funding bids, benefiting thousands of people and sustainable organisations and charities. Taking people's VISIONS of REALITY and promoting an ageing well society.

In my 30's, I developed further my personal development and offered private coaching in my spare time spending evenings and weekends delivering women's workshops promoting positive health and well-being. I loved developing my passions and finding my purpose in life, helping others understand the importance of good mental health, resilience, effective communication, the importance of healthy relationships and self-love.

While studying psychology and sociology at college and university, I developed an intense interest in people's communication and behaviour. I started to invest more time in myself during my 30's picked up again my studying, personally developing and growing as a person becoming highly self-aware and finding my own identity, understanding my own needs and values in life.

I had a traditional Christian family upbringing in a small town called Cookstown in the heart of Northern Ireland, and I was looked after by two hard-working parents. Being the baby girl growing up with three older brothers, I found I was the little shy exploring sister in a big world with hidden dreams. I wish I had started writing sooner.

I became an author at the age of 33 with my first book, *Seeing it Through Our Eyes*. I captured stories of local people from my hometown about their lifestyle, work, places of interest, traditions and culture. The two years of research and the interactions with people in my first book opened up a whole new world of what life was like for older generations in my home town Cookstown. I could see a whole new world through other people's eyes. Many local people's life memories stood out to me. I concluded by the end of the book that the beauty of the majority of their happiness was about embracing simplicity. One man reminisced about "eating a homemade hot soda scone with melting the butter by the fireside, listening to ma's stories". It brought smiles of joy and happy times to just one of the men I interviewed. Meaningful family bonding moments, medicines and cures, playtimes with skittles and the fun at the donkey derby races are just some memories that would light up their faces as they told me their life history and their recipes for happiness.

Through this first book, I found my love of writing and also designed many health and empowerment programmes in my twenties, which also challenged me to address my health and personal issues. I found myself continually wanting to grow to be a better version of myself every day. Being uncomfortable and being unhappy at times in my life meant something needed to change in my life. We are all are faced with challenging times, but we need to follow through on focusing on what indeed makes us truly happy.

Do you know what makes you happy in life? Do you go seeking it or keep wondering? Do you wait to be sacked before you change your career, do you wait to be dumped before you find the right person, do you only start looking after your health when you hit a health crisis? Do things continuously go wrong for you and you wonder why? Do you wonder why other people succeed in life, and they are happy, fulfilled and successful?

### **What makes me happy in life?**

- Caring and loving my beautiful daughter Leanne is important to me and inspiring her to grow up to be a healthy, responsible and independent adult.
- Having a healthy relationship with a special person, sharing life and special moments, laughing and exploring the world together.

- I am maintaining healthy relationships with my family and friends. I like surrounding myself with people who have beautiful qualities. I want a life where my soul partner prioritises me, understands me, values me and solely loves me sharing wonderful memories.
- Talking to my friends and family supporting them, catching up and making lifetime moments that we can laugh about and remember as we age.
- Cosying up with on the sofa with a hot cuppa and tasty snack in the evening with that loving and secure feeling of being in a healthy relationship where we can communicate and talk expressing our feelings and support for each other.
- Driving in my car and listening to music - singing away to my favourite tunes, even though I am not proud of my singing, but I love singing, and it fills me with joy.
- I am working to make a difference to others giving me purpose each day. I love helping others achieve better health and well-being, fulfilling people's lives with purpose.
- Supporting others to love and form healthy relationships is important to me, as well as assisting others in living a life they love, exploring their dreams.
- Being connected to friends, family and meeting new people to learn more about the meaning of life and spirituality.
- Connecting to people on my phone and laptop is key to my work and promoting positive health outcomes for people – making a difference to people's lives.
- Learning and personally developing daily by reading about exceptional people through books, blogs and social media, modelling, and learning from inspirational authors.
- I have a lovely comfortable home with clean and welcoming surroundings.
- I am keeping physically active and fit, walking and personal exercises suitable to my interests and needs.
- Healthy eating with my family and friends, making healthy meals and tasting new yummy dishes, checking out new food blogs, Pinterest, recipe books and lifestyle magazines.
- Travelling and walking in nature appreciating sunshine, freedom and a little freshness of a flower. When you love nature, you will find beauty everywhere. I enjoy exploring, relaxing and having a soul break taking time out from work. Just doing nothing gives me time to realign my priorities and my purpose.
- I am listening to relaxing music, finding new artists and adding them to my playlists on my YouTube Library.
- I am reading books, positive quotes, inspirational videos, and making up my positive quotes and posts to share with my private Facebook group: Women Inspired.
- I am watching documentaries - learning and appreciating the tails of life and beauty of the undiscovered world that I may never get to see or experience.
- Looking at my dream board on my wall and being content that I am achieving my dream life or working towards new goals that excite me.
- Having good faith and good spiritual practice with healthy lifestyle habits.

When I desired change in all areas of my life, I delved deeper into myself to master change and worked on myself, and I took my learnings from other exceptional role models. Role models leave clues to their happiness and success. As I developed year after year, I started seeing myself and others differently. When I enhanced my self-awareness, and when I had more life experiences, I began to understand others more extensively and seen the world through a different lens.

**"Sometimes, it takes a little sadness to know happiness, failures to appreciate achievements and trauma to experience personal growth."**

Being a single parent for many years and bringing up my daughter Leanne majority on my own, I had to be mentally strong, especially surviving domestic violence with physical and emotional trauma. I realised later in life that I didn't know the differences between a healthy relationship and an unhealthy relationship, staying in the wrong relationships for far too long with conflicting values leading to many turbulent and vulnerable periods in my life. During vulnerable periods of our lives, we need to be cautious with who we let into that space. People who you let into your life can be your poison or your medicine.

At times, it was tough being a single parent, but I realised my daughter Leanne was my rock, my focus and my purpose for living through my turbulent times. Taking on the role of a single mum has an exhaustive role description with a big purpose. Buying her first pair of shoes, seeing her walk for the first time, taking her to school, intervening with study time, helping out with homework, reading, sorting out the birthday parties, backing the school books, having sleepovers, debating boyfriends, trips to the dentist and the dreadful braces, addressing bullying – popping up on parents doorsteps and sorting out the school trips. Oh, and I can't forget the evening outings to concerts like Boyzone and Chris Brown – the perks of being a mum!

I ended up coaching my daughter Leanne at the age of nineteen towards her dream of being Miss Northern Ireland 2015, a dream she had from the early age of eight years old after watching princess dairies after school every day when she was at her granny's waiting on me to come home from work. Small girls have hidden dreams and fairy-tale worlds that are too distant for us adults to find or understand. I always tried my best to make sure Leanne had the right parenting support to follow her personal and professional dreams, making sure she had a positive, healthy mindset. I told her many times "Believe and You Can Achieve" - I even bought her a drinking mug with that mantra, so she could focus on telling herself this every day.

I used to sit with my Granny Curry when I was about eight years old watching Miss World year after year. It was our special bonding yearly event watching Miss World or Cliff Richard specials and little did I know back then that I would have a daughter who would walk the Miss World stage in 2015. I always asked Santa year after year for a baby sister when I was young and prayed to God to magically turn my baby doll into a sister. Well, Leanne, my baby daughter, ended up just like my baby sister, so my prayers received answers years later.

My perception of a fairy-tale dream life as a teenager was also met by many inner storms that challenged me and changed me throughout my adult life. By regaining good faith and hope for a better future, I found a road of inner peace, love and happiness with a higher sense of living well even during my vulnerable times. With a roller coaster of pain, dark times, loneliness and many nights crying myself to sleep over inner and outer conflict, I always had to rise each morning as a working mum to put a big smile on my face to hide the inner hurt and the Post Traumatic Stress. Sometimes those closest to me would see the hurt deep in my eyes, but there were days I felt I had no more tears to cry. Getting through the day was a struggle when I didn't know how to cope, feeling a failure, broken or ashamed to ask for help. Trauma has ways of burning memories deep into your mind; something which we didn't learn at school.

During a work meeting, a girl asked me one day: "Elaine, you are always looking out for everyone else – are you ok?". No-one ever asked me if I was ok before, and I hide it well, and work was my escape from reality, it was my parallel living existence. My working world took me into caring, thinking about and loving others to take me away from my broken dark reality at times. I broke down in tears in this meeting answering this work colleague is feeling embarrassed, helpless, and at breaking point struggling in a world that I felt alien in but just got on with it. I didn't recognise myself anymore, and it wasn't certainly my dream life living in fear, control or with the abuse I did not have growing up in my family home. My dreams of that

fairy-tale life as a little girl had turned into a domestic abuse nightmare for many years, wondering where it all went wrong.

I had three choices: let my burdens define me, let them destroy me or let them strengthen me, and I am glad I decided to let it strengthen me, getting the right help and support. I decided to stop playing the victim role and opted to change my life, with the attitude to survive, thrive and inspire. That moment I changed the story of my life with the right guidance and supportive friends, Lifeline and Women's Aid.

With essential help and guidance, I started to value myself more. By valuing myself more, I began to stop staying in abusive, controlling and toxic relationships. Many years later, after deep grounded work on myself, I started to attract new people into my life and stopped hitting the self-destruct button. Positive people came into my life to lift me rather than put me down. I felt the urge to flourish and become a better version of me every day. My dreams got bigger; my beliefs and standards changed, my motivation for life and the meaning of life changed. I had significant transformational shifts, and I made big changes in my life that led to more content and happier me. My hopes and new dreams shaped my new future. I was striving for the best version of me.

Between the years 2012-2018 in my life, I have to say that this was a time of significant personal and spiritual growth. That's when big changes happened for me, and my most content happier life kicked in with new healthy habits. I went back to university, and as a mature student at the age of forty-one, I found that I paid more attention to university the second time around. During my studying, I found myself hungry to develop my knowledge and not just to learn for academic reasons. The capacity to learn is a gift, and my willingness to learn was a choice.

Now in my 40's, I truly feel the happiest and satisfied in my life. Content about myself, in control of my health challenges, recognising my value and achievements, being grateful every day for my life with a loving daughter, parents, family, friends and loving fiancé Amine. I realised I needed to create great qualities within myself, have a greater awareness of my needs with high emotional well-being before I could attract and sustain the right soul partner and abundance into my life. I practised more self-love and worked on being the best version of myself, understanding the need to change areas of myself too. I knew I had to become a better daughter, a better mother and loving partner aligning to my innate values to attract the best family life for me that gave me sustained internal happiness, good emotional health and sustained wellness.

Having a passion for making positive differences to people's lives for over 20 years, I decided to start my transformation and performance coaching business to maximise my opportunities to help more people focus on their personal growth, health, love and success.

After much research and observing many changes and transformational shifts during my personal and professional life, I realised that there was an art to living well – with six core areas of life needing attention for a happy and meaningful life. These six areas command great detail in the six sections of this book detailing my Art of Living Well formula.

### **What can you expect from this book?**

The six different sections of this book will give you in-depth lessons that will change your thinking, your behaviour and your actions — all working towards a better version of you. Questions and exercises will let you evaluate your life and allow you to take action.



I know many times when I felt unhappy, I wasn't sure where the key to my unhappiness lay. Now I know my formula for happiness, and I know if I am neglecting any area of my life what is out of balance. Maybe you are so successful in their work but overweight and need to address having a healthy body? Perhaps you have a healthy body but have poor intimate relationships and need to focus on improving your relationships and communicating better? Maybe you are successful at work, financially healthy with a great social lifestyle but lack parenting skills? Maybe you are such a loving person but have bad habits with have poor relationships with family? Balancing these six-key areas of life in my art of living formula is the key to overall living well.

You can live the best life you can by communicating the right way, acting the right way, creating good habits, kicking unhealthy habits to realise they were only weaknesses and only part of you. So, don't let your small weaknesses control or dictate all of your life.

I am dealing with challenges in going to happen in all spheres of your life - whether it is decision making, finding yourself in a tense environment, dealing with difficult relationships or negative people. I hope you will find answers that may help you deal with your inner and outer conflicts, coping with your challenges and breaking those chains of destruction. Developing yourself and the relationship you have with yourself creates better relationships with others. I found the more content I was about my feelings, my relationships, my work and my inner thoughts daily, the more it changed how I interacted with others.

Concentrate on your good habits or traits rather than always putting yourself down over small insignificant issues. You are more than just your unhealthy habits, so don't let them blind the powerful you deep inside. You were meant to be fabulous, so the only one holding you back from being the best version of yourself is YOU. Breathe in love, balance your mind, nourish your body, protect your heart and understand your soul. Know that you are unique and amazing and made to experience life in a wonderful loving way.

This book will test your mind; your health; your relationships; your career and finances; your lifestyle and your soul purpose. Through each section, you will assess key areas of your life with enhanced self-awareness and creativity. Creatively is the way I share my soul with the world, losing the fear of being judged or being ashamed of my failings in my past. A creative adult is a child living, surviving and thriving. Your creative work will tell your story of your life. Is your creativity stuck, or do you believe each new day is a second chance to let yourself flourish towards a better life?

Finding yourself and liberating the **REAL YOU** will give you so much more confident, inner power and positive energy. You may avoid looking inwardly at yourself because you acknowledge fear, sadness, grief, bad memories and past hurt. Realise what your current problems are and when you go into your victim mode – this can signal towards an area of change. Change is happening every day everywhere in the world, so learn how to dance with change. Change is maybe on your doorstep now rapping at your door - so are you going to welcome it or ignore it? You can't dampen the spirit of someone who has love and hope in their veins.

A healthy mind with great self-love means you are open about who you are. You share your thoughts, your feelings, fears, mistakes and understand what makes you tick. You stop having to prove to people how great you are, how great a parent you are, how great a partner you are because of those that know you make you feel worthy. You learn to discard negative people, don't accept bad manners, don't surrender to peer pressure, you stop people-pleasing and increase time and respect for yourself. You can fully accept and enjoy being loved by someone else. You are secure about your feelings and how others see you. You value yourself

as you see the beauty in yourself and acceptance for who you truly are. When you have high self-love, everything else flows into place.

I am still mastering my life and will continue to live with love, hungry to learn and eager to grow every day. We can never thrive for perfection as perfection doesn't exist but improving from the previous day or last year is such a positive action. Wake up each day, buzzing to learn something new and be grateful for every experience within your reach.

Find out what your sole purpose in life is now. Even if you think you are at a dead-end with no focus or no goals find your self-worth and don't let your dreams vanish, they are still deep inside you so bring them to life. Believe you deserve a second chance, breaking down your fears and barriers. You have the power to create your new life NOW. Be clear why you are here.

**“I offer you hope, health, deeper love, contentment and a guide to a better life – loving yourself, loving others, loving your partner, loving your job and loving life” - Are you ready to change your life?**

There is a beautiful life waiting for you, and it just needs a good mindset, with a clear vision, your time, your commitment, your passion and the right guidance and action. You are a diamond ready to be dusted off and shine in every area of your life.

**“THE ART OF LIVING WILL GIVE YOU LESSONS FOR A LIBERATED AND MEANINGFUL LIFE”**