

Praise for
The Woman's Field Guide™
to *Exceptional Living*

“I have come to believe that the main task of each of us perfectly imperfect humans is to remember: there are always fresh possibilities to be discovered, we are always loved, we are part of the Whole. Corrie offers exactly the kind of splendid playful reminders I need.”

Jennifer Louden,
author of *The Woman's Comfort Book*
and *The Life Organizer*
www.jenniferlouden.com

“Corrie provides a powerful call to action and simple solutions to begin today. Pick up the book and prepare to be inspired.”

Wanda Urbanska, President/Host of
“Simple Living with Wanda Urbanska”
television series
www.simplelivingtv.net

“This field guide to being a woman is inspired. It is a powerful resource for making a good life great. Don’t leave home without it!”

Helene Van Manen,
MCC Master Certified Coach
www.coachhelene.com

“A fun, thought-provoking little book you’ll want to revisit often! Written with a light hearted, yet soulful style, it’s thoroughly engaging, inspiring, and uplifting.”

Carol McClelland, Ph.D.,
author of *The Seasons of Change*
www.transitiondynamics.com

“Corrie Woods offers an irresistible invitation and resourceful guide to living a life boldly, creatively, and happily. She provides a wealth of ideas, practices, and tools that are inspirational, practical, and motivational. This book makes a life-affirming and positive contribution to any reader!”

Angeles Arrien, Ph.D.
Cultural Anthropologist
author of *The Four-Fold Way*
and *Signs of Life*
www.angelesarrien.com

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Practical Steps for
Living a Big, Bold, Beautiful Life!

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Corrie Woods



New York

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Introduction

The seed of this book was planted a few years back by a man I adored. My grandfather held a special place in my heart. I am not sure if it was the stories he wove of days gone by, the North Carolina patch of heaven that he and my grandmother tended and I loved to visit, or the captivating sparkle in his eyes.

On one remarkable day, a few precious words he shared changed my life. As he held my hand, he smiled and said, “Corrie, I have lived a great life. If I had it to do over again, I wouldn’t change a thing.” Those were the last words he would share with me.

In that moment I felt like I was being handed a torch to carry forward – a torch that blazed with the words: Wake up! Don’t miss another minute of your life! Live it! Love it! And when your days are ended you will be able to smile and say, “If I had my life to live over again I wouldn’t change a thing. No regrets!” This was the proverbial wake-up call of

my life. It rang out loud and clear. The path I have followed, from that day to this, led to the writing of this guidebook. It is my heart's way of continuing to pass the torch along.

It is in that spirit that I share this book. As you read through the pages, cover-to-cover, or pick and choose pertinent sections, notice what resonates with you, what calls you out to play, what invites deeper inquiry. There may be rich memories that rise up and beckon you to dust them off, brand new insights that stir your excitement, or even a few sticky spots that grab your attention. Along the way, you will find invitations to move beyond reading the pages by engaging in the experience at hand. The Field Notes pages invite you to pause with the chapter, to take out a pen and journal to the prompts provided, or to whatever has bubbled up for you. With the turn of each page, the opportunities are ripe for you to identify and embrace the many facets of a well-lived and well-loved life.

It is my intention for you to play and allow the following pages to guide you onto a path of more vibrant living.



Setting
Your Inner
Compass
To Yes!



Stand in the Spotlight

“If what others thought of you wasn’t important – if the only thing that mattered was how your heart felt about your life – what would you be doing differently?”

– Melody Beattie

Just imagine, the stage curtains are drawn and you are standing backstage, alone in the darkness. The house is full. Anticipation is building. You feel butterflies in your stomach. You know when the curtains open, a magnificent woman will be revealed standing center stage, in the spotlight, fully expressed. And, frankly, the thought terrifies you.

What does fully expressed really mean? A word that comes to mind is authentic. According to *The Merriam-Webster Dictionary*, authentic means: *true to one’s own personality, spirit, or character.*

To live authentically means that you truly hold nothing back. You believe in who you are and the gifts you have to share. Yet, as simple as this might

sound, there are countless reasons people have difficulty living authentically, difficulty showing up in full color, difficulty being fully expressed.

My awareness of my tendency to show up as “less than” grew out of a handful of words shared by an insightful support person in my life. For all the fabulous things that I had going on in my life, for all that I was being and becoming that I was proud of, his questions went something like this: *Corrie, in what ways are you holding back from really showing up? How and where do you reduce your presence in the world?*

I realized in an instant, given how deeply those words resonated, that he was onto something.

My line of exploration and inquiry evolved over time and began with:

In what ways am I holding back?

And on to:

What am I afraid of?

And finally:

What steps can I take to jump onto center stage in my life and stand in the spotlight beaming, as a fully expressed woman?

What an evolution this began and what a change this brought to my life and to who I am becoming!

There are barriers many women face that stand in the way of courageously, joyfully showing up. The four most common blocks – The Four Big Bullies – are:

the should
the have to
the yeah-but
the I'll get around to it when.

The ability to knock these obstacles down, one by one, comes first with noticing *how* they present themselves in your life. By noticing and naming these culprits, you build your awareness. That is step one to effective change.

The Should: I should be more like so and so. I should look different. I should consider other people's needs before my own.

The Have To: I have to work in this job I hate. I have to avoid touchy subjects with so and so. I have to do countless things I really do not enjoy and that's life.

The Yeah-but: Yeah-but, I am too out of shape to get into shape. Yeah-but, I am too old to get hired for a great job.

The I'll get around to it when: I'll get around to eating a better diet when the holidays have passed. I'll get around to managing my finances when I get caught up. I'll get around to writing that important letter when I finish up the things on my To Do List.

The roles you perform in response to these nasty bullies, the masks you wear when interacting with the outside world, and the time you spend putting off real joy gets in the way of living a fully expressed life on your own terms. Over time, you may find the person you have crafted is a far cry from who you really are.

In time you *can* return home. In time you *can* set masks aside. In time you can celebrate landing the role of a lifetime – that of being your glorious, authentic self. How to prepare for this starring role in your life?

- Remove the masks. Notice in what ways you may be showing up as someone else or for someone else in your life. Take off those masks that get in the way of your authentic expression and put them on the shelf.

- Practice extraordinary self-care. Be number one on your own priority list and commit to taking great care of yourself so that when the curtains open, you will be beaming with pride and confidence.
- Get clear about your gifts. We all have unique and stunning gifts to give. Perhaps you can teach, offer a helping hand, share a warm and caring heart, or present a fresh perspective that leads to new solutions. Step far away from what you should do and identify what makes your heart sing. Acknowledge and embrace your gifts and then share them with the world.
- Choose your support circle wisely. Be prepared to put some distance between yourself and those who do not support you showing up in all your glory.

It takes guts to stand in the spotlight, but the rewards are rich: greater joy, no regrets, expressing

your passions rather than holding them at bay, the flood of incredible people who show up to play with you because your light is shining far and wide. Take center stage, completely expressed in your life, and you will find that the rewards last a lifetime.

Begin crafting a new script today with yourself in the starring role. When you commit to live authentically, the curtains will open wide for you. There will be no more hiding backstage in the shadows. As you proudly take your place on center stage in the spotlight, your gifts to the world will be revealed, the audience will cheer, and you will have the time of your life!

Some of my favorite fully expressed women

Helene Van Manen

<http://www.coachhelene.com>

Jennifer Louden

<http://www.jenniferlouden.com>

Sandra Magsamen

<http://www.sandramagsamen.com/>

Jean Shinoda Bolen, M.D.

<http://www.jeanbolen.com/>

Cheri Britton

<http://www.boomthinking.com/>

Susan Jeffers, Ph.D.

<http://www.susanjeffers.com>

I invite you to learn more about them!

Field Notes

A post-it kind of day:

In what ways are you showing up as less than your glorious self? Carry with you a pad of post-its and jot down any time you notice yourself holding back, not fully expressing yourself. Stick them all right here and in a couple of days come back to look at what you have written. Interesting?



Field Notes

Banish the Bullies:

Each time you notice one pop up,
transform your language in that moment.