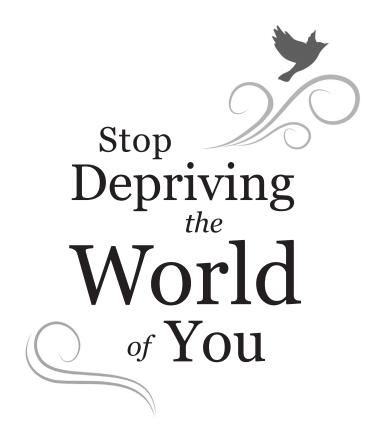


A Guide for Getting Unstuck

DARLENE M. CORBETT

Depriving the World of You



A Guide for Getting Unstuck

DARLENE M. CORBETT

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Cover/Jacket designer Eileen Rockwell Interior design by Susan Ramundo I dedicate this book to my husband, Steven Hyjek; my longtime friend and consultant, Sandra Talanian; and in memory of my spirited mother, Dolores, and sweet father, Michael, who I firmly believe are smiling from afar.



"Whatever the mind can conceive and believe, it can achieve."—Napoleon Hill

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Get Unstuck: All Living Specimens Are in Movement

Have you ever really thought about the fact that the universe is constantly in flux? That's right! Nothing truly stays the same. If you have never given this much reflection, take a few moments to focus on this idea. Although such shifting is not always visible to the human eye, there is movement all around us. Often, we take it for granted. The earth rotates around the sun, but we do not feel it. The seasons change, and we see it as part of life, except for those of us in the northeast who grumble about humid summers and freezing winters.

Without thinking about movement, we come to appreciate the gifts we receive from such activity.

Beautiful perennials begin their arrival at spring's doorstep, reminding us that the dry heat of summer is right around the corner. Glorious autumn ushers in a unique display of colors, and although many of us eventually tire of the cold and snow, some people, especially skiers, enjoy winter wonderland.

What about the animals? They instinctively recognize the times of the year to accelerate their movement. Robins head south for the winter along with other species including many human snowbirds. The Monarch butterfly is an example of movement and change at its most spectacular. They leave their caterpillar body through metamorphosis and become the most majestic of winged insects before moving to warmer climates.

All four classical elements exhibit movement. The earth is constantly shifting, but so subtly as not to upset nature, except on rare occasions when we experience deadly earthquakes. The air is moving, as creatures of the earth breathe in oxygen and expel carbon dioxide. For those who study the sun, movement happens along its surface. Finally, water, magnificent H_oO in its fluid state, abounds with motion. Even when frozen, under the right conditions, movement prevails.

Now you might wonder, why I am discussing such an esoteric issue? Should this not be left to philosophers, climatologists or perhaps biologists or other scientists who are interested in the impact of movement on us? For the average Joe or Josephine, does it really matter? People are so busy with their own lives they might simply say, "Who cares! What does this have to do with me?" I would look at them and say, "Everything and anything related to you and your world." They might look at me with a perplexed expression, but not desire to continue the dialogue. Others might yawn, look bored and change the subject or even walk away, but what about those who don't? They begin to ponder this idea as something worth exploring. If you fall in that last category, I am talking about you. Yes, right again, you, the one who is open to possibilities and willing to explore the idea of movement and its influence on your life journey. My desire to write this book is for you! I want to share

with you my belief in your ability to get unstuck and move beyond your current circumstances.

It is my ultimate belief that the ingenious author, George Eliot, was correct. "You are never too old to be what you might have been." I invite you to consider her words of wisdom. I also suggest you give my words pause: "The bad news is that nothing stays the same, but the better news is nothing stays the same." The impermanence of each moment gives us opportunity for growth and transformation. With each slight shift, change can occur, and that, my friend, is a wonderful thing! Each of us should keep this in mind all the days of our lives.

I hope you are ready to awaken the gifts, talents, and strengths that are lying dormant in you. Maybe you have started this process but lost momentum. Either way, you have already begun the exercise of getting unstuck and back on the right path. Let's get going! Be prepared for a fun and exciting adventure. Let me help you stop depriving the world of you, and watch what happens as you begin to sparkle and shine, from the inside out.

CHAPTER 2

Get Unstuck: You Are in Movement

Sometimes it feels as if you are in a rut and will never get out, so why bother trying? You believe that your efforts to do something different have gone by the wayside. Certain people seem to have it easier and just glide through life unencumbered. Sound familiar? Most people have these feelings at some time in their lives. There are even some people who believe certain situations remain permanent. One could make the argument for such a case, but what they forget is that what seems to be a permanent situation may have been a result of some change which continues to reverberate in one's life. Let me give you an example:

A few months ago, while in a nail salon of all places, I was discussing this very issue with a group of women.

Most agreed with me or least appeared to be silently mulling over the idea. One woman who did not seem to be listening to the conversation suddenly turned to me and said, "That is not true! Some things are permanent." I was a bit taken aback by her rather blunt exclamation, but asked her what she meant. Her response was, "I ended my marriage, and it will remain permanent."

I looked at her and gave a concessionary nod, but then I asked her to consider the following: "Yes, your divorce may be permanent, but you moved and became unstuck." Staring at me intently, she smiled begrudgingly and nodded in agreement.

I invite you now to see for yourself. Take a journey with me to observe that not only our universe is in flux but every part of you is too.

Close your eyes and take a deep breath. Now imagine you are walking along a beautiful beach in the early morning of a lovely summer day. The sun is



beginning to rise, and as that big red ball makes its way into the sky, a stunning masterpiece of purple, rose, and gold is developing. It is as if an artist took paint from its palette and dabbed different colors onto a canvas, about to create something new, something magnificent, something never to be seen again on this new day, this new dawn. Continuing your way along the beach, notice with each step you take, the sand is moving so slightly, and with each breath you take, oxygen is entering your body as carbon dioxide is being expelled. Perhaps now you wouldn't mind turning your attention to the water. We have a special connection to water. We are conceived in a watery substance. We need water. We are comprised mainly of water, and we are, like water, fluid. I invite you to take a journey inward, and think about the splendid design of the intricate human body. The respiratory, circulatory, muscular, and other systems are working together in synchronicity. Now imagine these systems are like the winds, strings, and brass sections of an orchestra, making beautiful harmonious music with the mighty brain conducting. What a dazzling creation! As you continue to visualize, think about the fact that every single cell of every part of your internal workings are in motion. Lavish movement truly abounds. Now just take a moment and enjoy the internal rhythms and fluidity of you. Whenever you are ready, take another breath and slowly open your eyes. Notice how you feel. Allow yourself a few moments to savor this experience.

When I have used this visualization with clients, they have expressed pleasure around embarking on such a tranquil excursion. When we finish, some have indicated their wish for it to never end. They smile when I remind them that even good things sometimes must end, another example of inconstancy. They know, however, they can close their eyes, focus, and evoke the image at any time.

My purpose for suggesting this exercise was for you to get in touch with movement. With all this external and internal fluidity, we know people get stuck personally and professionally. Consequences can be innumerable. When it is personal, the impact may have a ripple effect on all areas of life. If it is professional, not only may it create job insecurity and



alienation of coworkers, but it can also affect family relationships and friendships. When this circuitous pattern occurs, stagnation seems to prevail, and the world begins to feel very dark, ugly and negative. Even during such stuck and stark periods, movement prevails, and, with that, beauty and light still exist.



Get Unstuck: Look for the Collateral Beauty

Not long ago, I reluctantly went to see the movie *Collateral Beauty* starring the fabulous Will Smith, Helen Mirren, and Edward Norton. My hesitation to attend was based on the trailers I had seen and mixed reviews I had read. Well, it was most fortuitous I ignored my impressions from both. The movie had a great impact on me. It was sad but haunting, and the phrase "look for the collateral beauty" resonated with me. Now let me be clear: The theme, the death of a child, is incomprehensible to imagine, and it is difficult to find meaning and beauty when such a tragedy occurs. If you look at the message on a broader scale, looking for collateral beauty is essential to survive in a world which can be quite unpredictable. What choice do we have? Sadly, and,

at times, understandingly, some are unable to find it. Others, however, recognize they must search for collateral beauty as a way to become unstuck and find meaning, even after the unspeakable occurs. Somehow, they begin to move in a different direction and seek beauty by engaging in charitable acts of goodwill and kindness. Although nothing can ever completely ease the deep wounds tragedy inflicts, such meaningful actions can assuage some of the pain and allow the light to emit again.

Light always finds a way to permeate the darkness. I have a lovely cousin who is losing her vision. As her eyesight diminishes, her light sensitivity increases, and her eyes actually blister when they're exposed to the light. This wonderful person has searched for every contraption to stop the light from entering her visual range. Thus far, she has been unable to do so. No matter what she attempts regarding eyewear and other accessories, the light filters through. Although it is a painful metaphor, her situation reminds us that light penetrates the darkest of barriers. In addition, my cousin maintains a sunny disposition even

as her eyesight withers. Her humor, effervescence, and belief in possibilities help her cope with the loss and the pain of her affliction. Without ignoring the sadness she expresses from time to time, she always finds a way to look for beauty under the most arduous of circumstances. I remind her that her attitude toward life and its shortcomings is a beam of light wherever she goes.

Although some people's circumstances may not be as dire as my cousin's, none of us will escape life's unfair challenges. In fact, we will receive wounds, and their eventual scar tissue, or what I refer to as the "splinters in the heart." Hopefully, we heal, accept life's battles, and continue to develop tools to prevent futility and atrophy. Also, we must savor those intermittent periods of peace and joy and allow them to embed in our brain. By doing so, we can draw upon them when collateral beauty and light are difficult to find.

Searching for beauty and light is not always visual, as my visually impaired cousin can attest and exemplify.

How about sounds such as laughter? What a beautiful gift from the universe! Laughter allows us to experience collateral beauty by lightening the mood. Not only does it move us physically and emotionally, but laughter is also infectious and engaging. Think about a time when you saw someone laughing or they told you a story which made you laugh. Maybe tears were streaming down your face. What fun you were having!

Take a moment now, close your eyes, and think of that image or a similar one which made you laugh so much you could not stop for several seconds. Really immerse yourself in the scene. Notice the smile it puts on your face. Recognize it as a testament to the fact that things can shift quickly. For many, laughter is curative; it is evidence that becoming unstuck may not be an insurmountable feat. Not only does it change your mood, but maybe, just maybe, a positive or creative thought will enter your mind which can alter the course of your direction. Voila! The collateral beauty has begun to reveal itself, and it is just the beginning.



Another sound that creates collateral beauty is music. Some music is fast and allows us to move and feel excited, free, and lighthearted. Even people who do not enjoy dancing or appear to be stoic and stiff cannot help but sway their body when the rhythm touches their spirit. A great example of this is in the movie Genius, a story about the friendship between renowned book editor Max Perkins and the literary giant Thomas Wolfe. In one scene, the serious and subdued Mr. Perkins, played by Colin Firth, is at a nightclub with the colorful Mr. Wolf, reenacted by Jude Law. The music is jazzy and bluesy, and Mr. Wolfe is having the time of his life. Mr. Perkins, in his somberness, slowly begins to smile and tap his foot. The rhythm and sensuality of this kind of music cannot help touch even the most restrained.

Even people who do not dance can become mesmerized by the beautiful fluidity of dance. Look at the popularity of T.V. shows like Dancing With The Stars and So You Think You Can Dance. One of my favorite dances to observe is the Argentine Tango. Watching the footwork of the experienced Tango

partners is magical. How about watching a belly dancer? Recently, a few of my high school friends and I attended a classmate's show at an assisted living facility. She and her troupe were performing a variety of Middle Eastern dances. Being half Lebanese, it was a treat for me to watch and be reminded of my heritage and family. Some of the dances were familiar, but there were a few which were not, including an Egyptian cane dance. As I looked around the room, I saw a number of older adults moving and clapping to the music. As they took in the beauty of these ancient dances, they appeared to be enchanted and moved. Watching these majestic women dance was captivating. They were all ages and sizes. You could see in their dance they were experiencing beauty through the marriage of music and movement, and we were the recipients of the collateral beauty.

Other music creates deep movement within, allowing us to experience collateral beauty in another form. Classical music generates this for me. When listening, I experience beauty and light on many levels and find tears rolling down my face because of the raw

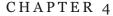
emotion it evokes. Recently, I became reacquainted with the classical guitar. I forgot how much I enjoyed the beauty of this tantalizing music.

Music is so powerful and can transform us. I am sure you agree! What is your favorite music? Again, close your eyes and imagine it. Better yet, if you have it readily available, go ahead and play it! See how much you will move or be moved, or maybe both! If nothing else, it proves the fact that if you can move; you can get unstuck!

Collateral beauty is everywhere, and it is not just revealed through images and sound. How about through smell and touch? Why do you think aromatherapy is so popular? How about all the women and men who wear a favorite cologne which is often the final embellishment for feeling beautiful? What about hugging and holding another human being, a loved partner/spouse, beloved pet, and most precious for many, a miraculous child? How about massages and spa treatments which mix touch and scent?



Collateral beauty can be experienced on many levels. Because we are so visual, we often forget about the expression of our other senses. We will discuss the importance of the multisensory experience as a skill in a later chapter. For now, as Helen Mirren aptly stated in the movie, "Look for the collateral beauty." As you do, watch what happens on your journey to becoming unstuck.



Get Unstuck: Habits = Behavior That Can Change

In 2013, Gallup did a national survey about the state of affairs in the American workplace. Disturbingly, they discovered that 70 percent of workers are dissatisfied with their jobs. Of that 70 percent, 18 percent were found to be highly disengaged, and, consequently, undermined their coworkers and companies. In the past, corporate America has tried different approaches to ameliorate workplace unhappiness. They scheduled lunch gatherings, purchased ping-pong tables, and pursued other perks to boost morale and increase motivation. These attempts were short term, and, although well intentioned, they ended up being costly and ineffective. Conclusively, Gallup determined that the American worker's satisfaction would improve if their manager

or supervisor acknowledged their strengths and took a more positive approach in their interactions with their subordinates. In addition, Gallup hypothesized that if corporate America applied this method that American productivity would double. Ultimately, profitability would increase, and everyone would benefit, from worker to corporation to shareholder to the economy. As we can see, this is major, and it points to the importance of using a positive message to help people get unstuck. The benefits of a positive approach are not surprising for those of us in the helping profession.

Even with the results of the survey, many work cultures continue to be negative, which can have negative effects on all aspects of a worker's life. Excuses are often made for those talented managers who were promoted for their work rather than their people skills. Their negative behavior is frequently ignored. They are visionaries, some might say, or they are good at their craft. Others say, "this is just the way he or she is, so just ignore them," or "don't take it personally." Many people are convinced that people do not change or are not capable of altering their behavior. As someone who has been in the people business for over 30 years, I see this as a defeatist position. In fact, everyone, in my humble but experienced opinion, is capable of change, because as my visualization displays, it is occurring within us and all around us. We are not talking about personality. This discussion is about changing behavior, because when we change our behaviors we become unstuck and open to the possibilities.

Before we discuss wrong attitudes around changing behavior, let us look more closely at the impact of this study. Why? It is a universal theme and has a bearing on all our relationships. When a parent asks an adolescent to tidy their room, instead of focusing on what is not done, they should point out their successes. At the end, the parent can mention that next time they could do such and such. Now this may be a simplistic approach, but it can be applied in the home with children and spouses and in the workplace with subordinates.

Let me give you an example of my own. Many years ago, there was a movie called Sleepless in Seattle

which some of you probably remember. I will never forget the scene between Rob Reiner and Tom Hanks where Mr. Reiner was complaining about his wife's desire to have all the pillows on the bed. He could not comprehend her need for these decorations. I smiled because I recalled asking my husband to include all the pillows when making the bed. When he finally did this, I saw that he did not place the pillows in a way which I would have preferred, but I bit my tongue and thanked him anyway. At a later date, I asked him to consider placing them in a different fashion. All of us need to be acknowledged for our attempts and strengths because doing so will motivate a person further. In my role as therapist, I had to understand a client's pathology and vulnerabilities. To a varying degree, every human being has faults, but our strengths are what heal us and help us get unstuck. By focusing on the positive traits of others, we will see far greater improvement.

Words are like fine surgery, as a graduate school supervisor told me long ago. I could not agree more. When I, like many others, suggest focusing on the positive, it does not mean that people should be



praised for nothing nor should they be coddled. In fact, their behavior needs to be addressed if they are not performing well personally or professionally. Our overly indulgent society is in danger of lowering the bar too much and decreasing expectations. Such an approach not only lacks effectiveness, but it can create more harm than good. We must always raise the bar and expect more from ourselves and others. The way it is executed, however, is the issue here.

When I was a first-term senior in high school, my average in Anatomy and Physiology was 89.75. The teacher had the choice of rewarding me with an Aor a B+. He decided to give me the lesser grade. On Parents' Night, my mother asked him the reason for his choice. He looked at her, smiled, and said, "Because she can do better." When my mother told me, we saw it as a compliment; later that year, I worked more diligently and received the coveted A. His confident message prompted me toward higher aspirations. He could have said, "She did not deserve it." Maybe I would have still worked harder, being a devoted student, but the negative approach would have been far less encouraging. The bottom line is:

Why not go with the positive stance? The chances are much more likely to reap greater rewards and assist some in getting unstuck.

Changing behavior involves changing a habit. What is a habit? According to Merriam-Webster, a habit is a pattern of behavior which is acquired due to repetition and becomes regular. Habits begin in the conscious and eventually become unconscious. Can habits be changed? Yes, but they are stubborn and difficult to alter. Like any success, it takes work and determination. If someone is ready to become unstuck from an unhealthy habit or behavior, they can and will do it. As the great Napoleon Hill stated: "Whatever the mind can conceive and believe, it can achieve." When I heard this quote, not long ago, I became enchanted with it because it speaks to the core of my belief system. There is no doubt in my mind that everyone, if they choose, can become unstuck, even from the most tenacious habits or behaviors. In fact, I believe we have this ability throughout our lives, which affords us the opportunity to explore new areas of productivity or unchartered territories of creativity.



In 2015, I wrote a blog post about this and was chastised. A few people emphatically expressed to me that I was wrong and by a certain age we must come to terms with just being. Well, I am not quite sure what they meant by "just being" and am not certain they themselves understood the meaning of their position. Certainly, it is their choice to live the remainder of their lives as they see fit. My firm stance, however, is that all of us should remain productive, creative, or find meaning to remain unstuck. Otherwise, people are missing an opportunity to bring greater fulfillment, even toward the last chapter of their lives. As Rabbi Kushner mentioned in his thought-provoking book, Overcoming Life's Disappointments, sometimes the best part of the game is the last few innings.

Before I discuss the science behind lifelong movement, let me give examples to refute the idea that people are incapable of change as they age. What about the fact that people take up new hobbies or develop new skills after age 50? Look at all the people who begin new careers. The writer Dominick Dunne's professional identity as a producer in Hollywood was finished when he began his career as an investigative

journalist and author which was prompted by his beloved daughter's tragic death. The Canadian author Carol Shields also began writing seriously after age 50. How about the artist Grandma Moses who did not begin painting in earnest until her late seventies? I say, "You go girl." President George W. Bush pursued a painting career after he left office and was over 60. What about the writer Harry Bernstein whose first book was published when he was 96? Yes, that is correct, age 96. Before their creative sparks took off, these people were not so extraordinary. You might say that they are the exception. We do not know because they ignored their age as a limitation and pursued those untapped talents which had remained dormant for years. You and I are not any different. It is about choice. If one's goals are less lofty, think about the fact that so many people develop a new skill or hobby in their later years. Some begin to learn a musical instrument. Others participate in games such as golf and bridge. There are even a few who go out to learn a foreign language. Perhaps there is an inner artist, writer, founder, or discoverer in you? As evidenced by these aforementioned luminaries, you can teach an old dog new tricks. You could be one of them if you choose to and stay the course.



Now let us return to the everyday behavior of the young and old. In my role as a hypnotherapist, I have witnessed people eliminating phobias as well as unhealthy habits such as nail biting, smoking, overeating, and other behaviors which have interfered in living healthier, more fulfilling lives. Yet, people often make excuses for behavior which impedes relationships. Some will say, "Oh, they have ADD or OCD or a touch of Asperger's." I am not dismissive of those burdens which can cause much suffering. They are certainly liabilities, but how does it benefit anyone to just focus on the pathology (which our 21st century society is exceptional at doing)? Consequently, our lowered expectations may prevent true talent from awakening.

Recently, I worked with a lovely woman whose young son has difficulty communicating. Rather than excuse his behavior, she helps him develop the skills which do not come naturally to him. He had to ask a few people some questions with her guiding him. She started out by asking him to just look at their faces. This devoted mother knows that communication skills are important for her son to live a healthier,

more balanced life. Our era of texting and emailing makes it easier to allow for certain behavioral styles, but in the long run, to overcome these budding impediments helps contribute to growth.

We must continue to be open to the *probability* that every human being has an ability to excel. I do not have to justify this statement because the innovation of the last century proves it. Our lives have become easier, safer, and freer as a result of humanity's evolving talent. Without being a Pollyanna, can you imagine how much humanity would benefit if everyone had the ability to explore their unique gifts? Maybe someday, but in the meantime, anyone who wishes to become unstuck must recognize their ability to become so. If you doubt me, think about that exercise I suggested earlier and go inward to connect with the movement all around you. Now get ready to hear about the science that substantiates everything I am discussing. It will prepare you for the tools and reminders I have in store for you.

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With a smile, hug and much gratitude,

Darlene

About the Author

Darlene Corbett is a Professional Speaker, Author and Success Coach. She has been in the people business for over 30 years and fervently believes everyone is capable of getting "Unstuck." Darlene lives in central Massachusetts with her husband and their enchanting Shih Tzus, Winston and Churchill. They are the true masters of the house and dazzle anyone whom they encounter. This is Darlene's first book, and she looks forward to completing her next.