

THE BEST WORST THING THAT HAPPENED TO ME

FROM VICTIM TO THE ARCHITECT OF MY LIFE



WALEUSKA LAZO

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DREAMCATCHER PRINT

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DEDICATION

To my younger self

I humbly dedicate this book to you in gratitude for our brave journey and the resilient legacy we leave behind to those whom we've had the privilege to love.

Thank you for being vulnerable, brave, and courageous enough to hold my hand in the times of darkness and to walk with me through this miraculous thing we call life.

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PREFACE



“The Universe has shaken you to awaken you.”

—Mastin Kipp

On April 2, 2016, I had a nervous breakdown. The illusion of the world I’d manufactured in my mind was torn down, leaving me feeling naked and exposed to a reality that I had fought to hide for so long. During the healing and spiritual process that I engaged in after this, I learned three fundamental truths that have drastically changed and improved my life.

Why am I telling you this up front? Because as you read about the different moments of brightness and darkness in my polka-dot life, I want you to be able to appreciate these components of human existence at play in your own life.

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The first truth may be difficult for you to accept. It was for me. But the sooner you understand it, the sooner you can start healing.

Here it comes.

First Truth

Everything you experience in your lifetime, good or bad, is created by you. God gave you this power. As the Bulgarian philosopher Omraam Mikhaël Aïvanhov wrote, “The creator has planted within every creature a fragment of himself, a spark, and a spirit of the same nature as himself and, thanks to this spirit; every creature can become a creator.”¹

The key words here are *every creature*. That means you and me. Both of us are responsible for the events, actions, and circumstances of our lives.

How is this possible?

We energetically create or attract whatever we think about: the good, the happy, the ugly, the painful, the love, the grief—everything in its totality. As beings of energy, our thoughts send vibrational waves of energy out into the quantum field of the universe, like signals; in turn, this field reflects our reality back to us.

You may object, saying, “*Wait a minute, I never wanted painful things in my life!*”

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I understand. I said the same thing.

The fact is that on some unconscious level you did.

Everything I've learned about the power of the brain in the last few years suggests that we are not even aware of as much as 95 percent of the thoughts we think daily; *these thoughts are subconscious and conditioned*. We are so unaware of this programming that we need to be very careful about what we allow to take residence in our minds. Any time the mind gets stuck, the energy available to us to create and attract better experiences is limited.

We energetically create or attract whatever we think about: the good, the happy, the ugly, the painful.

But wait. The situation gets worse. Not only do we attract things based on what we think about on a regular basis, sometimes what we attract is a fluke. According to Joe Dispenza, "You create by not creating. If you are not actively creating your life, you leave it to the randomness of reality and something is going to bump into you."²

Everything I have learned tells me that we are not simply bystanders in the world, or that things are happening independently of us. We are active participants in, and cocreators of, the world we live in.

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We attract that which is on the same frequency as us. Conscious or not, willingly or not, things vibrating at the same level we are vibrating can be expected to come into our energy field and thus our lives. We need to learn to be more active creators because the human brain is mighty.

Once I understood that thoughts become things and that I was responsible fully for the outcomes of my life, I stopped blaming others to bail myself out and took responsibility for my actions and life. By shifting my perception, I went from being a victim to an empowered agent who capably steers and adjusts the sails of my boat on my journey through life.

Second Truth

Every painful event in your life holds a seed of enlightenment. If you choose to cultivate these seeds, you'll gain wisdom. Pain can be an excellent teacher.

Hurting sucks. Yes, it does. I do not know any human being who would willingly want to go through times of hardship. It is not in our nature to want to suffer, yet many of us spend our whole lives acting as if we're imprisoned with a faithful cellmate named misery.

Our fear of hurting is the reason why so many have a difficult time recognizing painful moments as opportunities

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to learn and evolve. We view our misfortunes as punishments rather than lessons we should be grateful for. But we can, as Gregg Braden says, “Change hurt into wisdom by finding new meaning in painful experiences.”³

It is amazing, the strength you can derive from pain. Pain can either paralyze and victimize you or it can open you up and liberate you. When I understood this, I began to see painful experiences in my life as wise agents that have come to teach me something valuable, sometimes gently and sometimes harshly, but either way to sharpen and guide me closer to my goals and dreams. It was all a matter of changing the lens through which I looked at the pain.

I shifted my perception and rather than seeing painful experiences as something permanent, which is what we often do while engulfed in it, I thought of it as something temporary. This may sound simple or common sense to you—it actually is—but common sense isn’t common. Learning to see the pain in your life as a teacher and as temporary can be one of the best strategies to become empowered. This way, you don’t get to be a powerless victim any longer. You become a student who is wiser and grateful for the lessons.

Third Truth

You are not alone. The Universe (the term I use to describe a higher, divine intelligence) is forever on guard and guiding you in a proper direction through signs and nudges. It wants to help you find a path aligned with your soul purpose.

I hope this brings you comfort. Out of the three truths, the first and third were the most empowering for me. The fact that a cosmic power is guiding me was mainly comforting. Once I became aware of and receptive to it, I saw evidence of this everywhere and I was surprised to see how active a role the Universe plays in our lives.

The Universe does not just give you what you want; it gives you what you need.

The Universe does not just give you what you want; it gives you what you need. It will use any means necessary to get your attention, including loss, grief, death, sickness, and on many occasions, even the people you love. It finds ways to show you things you have hidden in the depths of your being that you need to

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remember, know, and act upon. It will bring to the surface of your conscious awareness all the things you need to address, learn, and heal so that ultimately you can reach your intended destiny.

This realization did not come quickly for me.

I am telling you this calmly now because I've already made peace with events in my life. But I can tell you that there was nothing peaceful or friendly about my initial encounters with the Universe. She came knocking at my door. My turn had come to learn karmic lessons, but I received her with mighty resistance.

I was a worthy opponent in a game of tug-o-war. The Universe pushed in one direction and I defiantly pulled in the other. The more she pulled, the harder I pulled. The more I struggled and resisted, the more painful her lessons became.

Who finally won, you may ask? She did. I am happy and grateful to say the Universe got the upper hand on me at last. And with this I recognized that it was time to quit fighting.

My point is this. You can trust the Universe, even if you can't see or understand her plan. She knows what she is doing. For me, it was in those thorny experiences of pulling with bleeding hands on the rope of

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enlightenment that I learned the most profound lessons
of my existence. I now humbly share these with you.

SEVENTEEN



GRATITUDE

“Nothing new can come into your life unless you are grateful for what you already have.”

—Michael Bernard Beckwith

Every night, you should leave your slippers far enough under the bed so that when you wake up you need to get down on your knees to reach them. And while you're down there, take a moment to say a small prayer of gratitude. If getting down on your knees is not your thing, take this as a recommendation to spend a bit of time each day being thankful for all that you have in your life. Remember that what you focus on every day is what expands in your life. It's a request to the Universe. If you feel, show, and express gratitude, the Universe will give you more of the same in return.

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Starting my day in a state of gratitude was the single most important thing I have ever done to transform my life. Spending even a few minutes in gratitude improved everything. This practice is the fastest way to feel happier and at peace. It boosts the immune system and leads to the formation of new neurological connections in the brain.¹ The repeated act of expressing gratitude will signal to your brain that you are in a creative mode of being, and that's when you begin to heal your body and life such that you can build a future of possibilities.

Starting my day in a state of gratitude was the single most important thing I have ever done to transform my life.

In the film *E-motion*, Neale Donald Walsch tells a wonderful story about a husband's advice to his wife on his deathbed. Being able from this perspective to discern what is important in life, he says, "Come close. I don't have much time left. Remember this each morning, the moment you take your head off the pillow: You already have all you need."²

Hearing this story made me think a lot, and I took it to heart.

Each morning now, as part of my spiritual practice, I make a point to become conscious of all the things I have

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in my life that are amazing. Before my feet hit the floor, I make sure I have expressed my gratitude for all I have—and not just for the good. I give thanks for the lessons, such as an illness that comes to warn me if I need to pay attention to something that is throwing me off balance. I express my gratitude for the big things and the little things.

To live in a state of perpetual gratitude, you must practice being grateful for all the different elements that make up the human experience. It is easy to feel happy and grateful when things are going according to plan. But that is not how it truly works in your favor. You need to feel grateful for it all—the pain, the grief, the loss, the love, the fortune, and the misfortune.

Too many people live unhappy lives feeling like victims of the environment. Being in a state of gratitude means that you accept the beautiful sunny days and the cloudy days. Take responsibility. If you do not like what you are creating, including an attitude or a perception, change it. As Joe Dispenza says: “You can learn and change in a state of pain and suffering, or you learn and change in a state of joy and inspiration.”³ The choice of how you feel is yours.

The beautiful thing is that we are gifted each day with a new tomorrow, a chance to make a new start. It is in

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that assurance of tomorrow that we humans find this world worth living. Everything passes. That is guaranteed. The night is always followed by daylight. Thunder and rain give way for rainbows. From knowing this, we obtain hope and strength to endure our lows.

My great grandmother used to tell me the story of a king who had a wise man among his advisors. One day, on the king's birthday, the wise man gave the king a gift: two small boxes wrapped in beautiful silverleaf paper. The wise man told his king, "*Open the first box when you feel you have reached all the happiness you could ever wish for. Open the second box when you think you are grieving so much that you cannot go on anymore.*"

Years passed. There came a time when the king felt he was the most fortunate man the earth had ever known. He remembered the words of his trusted adviser and proceeded to open the first box. Inside there was a small piece of paper that read: "*This too shall pass!*"

Years and years later, the king had aged and fallen ill, he had lost his queen, his adult daughter had moved away, and he had lost most of his fortune. He felt depressed and considered himself the most unfortunate man in the world. He proceeded to open the second box. Inside there was a small piece of paper that read: "*This too shall pass!*"

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That is life: All the good, the happy, the bad, and the sad eventually pass. You must not waste your happy times worrying about the not-so-good times that can come. Enjoy what you have at any given moment because, as the story illustrates, this too shall pass.

When you learn not only to think grateful thoughts occasionally, but to express gratitude daily, your hope and your faith will become hardwired into your subconscious mind. If you can achieve that, nothing will stop you. To borrow another insightful line I've heard said repeatedly, you may find yourselves in situations where you are cracked open, but you'll never be broken.

With daily practice, I shifted all my focus from the fear and anger that I was feeling and focused instead on love and gratitude. I began to breathe deeply and opened myself to appreciate the things I had and paid less attention to the ones I was lacking.

Try it. What do you have to lose? You possibly have everything to gain.

Living in a state of gratitude felt strange for me in the beginning. I was so programmed to focus just on the negative; but I pushed myself and gave thanks at first for obvious things like my kids, my family, my health, my financial wellbeing, and my friends. As time went by, I noticed that it had become easier to think of a myriad of

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things to be thankful for. There were mornings when I couldn't stop because I had so much to appreciate.

I took a workshop with happiness "guru" Shawn Achor and he recommended saying three unique things you are grateful for over a 30-day period without repeating the same things twice. While I did not follow that exact format, I see how this would be a very good exercise to get your mind used to noticing new things that enrich your life. If you want, try it.

It is easy for people to feel grateful when things are good. But I find that it is equally important, if not more important, to give gratitude when things are not as good. Remember, you cannot appreciate the light unless you have seen darkness. You cannot appreciate joy without experiencing sorrow, health without sickness, love without loss, abundance without lack.

I had a beautiful gratitude experience once. I was in my daughter's room, falling asleep on her bed in the middle of the day, and I decided to take a moment to express my gratitude in my mind. The feeling was so intense that tears were pouring out of my eyes. I was asleep for a period of two hours, and I don't believe I stopped giving thanks even in my sleep. I could sense that I had stayed in a state of gratitude because as I woke

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up I was still giving thanks for everything around me and in my life.

You might be shocked at how many things we should be thankful for—especially the invisible things we are likely to take for granted. For example, we should be thankful for every organ in our body that regenerates out of our sight. Speaking for myself, I have discovered that I am inclined always to give thanks to my heart. I feel deep gratitude and awe for its function, for its strength, for its intelligence, for its guidance, and for never steering me in the wrong direction.

Emotions felt in the heart produce magnetic waves that are more powerful than those produced by any other organ in the body. These waves connect us with everything on the planet. Gregg Braden, who has written extensively on the capacity of the heart, says: “The human heart is the strongest generator of both electrical and magnetic fields with the power to influence the very field of this planet, including everything that sustains life and sustains the healing in our bodies.”⁴ From Braden I learned about the sensory neurites, which are cells in the heart that act like brain cells—but think independently of the brain.⁵

Have you ever heard the expression, “Just listen to your heart! Your heart always knows?” That is because

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it really does! If I need to make a life-impacting decision, I have learned to ask my heart and trust its guidance. In the past, I let my brain guide my life. Now, if I cannot get my brain and heart to be in alignment with one another, I follow my heart. It seems to know much faster than my brain what the right thing is for me to do in the moment because the heart doesn't go through filters.

The best way to live is in having constant communication with the heart and viewing the world from a place of gratitude.

I believe the best way to live is in having constant communication with the heart and viewing the world from a place of gratitude. If you do that, nothing will defeat you. You will be strong enough to face the setbacks and circumstances that come. You will learn and grow each time from your pain as you search for the gifted lessons it brings. If a person comes into your life and leaves—well, that person was never meant to play a permanent role in your life.

Find something that makes you want to get up in the morning, something bigger than yourself. This too can inspire gratitude. I find that leading a life of service to others does it for me. Find something that makes your

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life on earth worth living. When you feel grateful, there is no room for lack. When you are in love with life, it is impossible to feel down and sad.

When you feel whole and grateful for who you are and what you have at any given moment in your life, that's when the miracles happen. Because you are connected to a field of infinite possibilities, as you show gratitude, the Universe manifests the best outcomes for you.

Start today. Don't wait a second longer. Embrace whatever pain or circumstance you are going through now. Close your eyes. Sit still and in silence and let the Universe guide you. Don't try to control it. Whatever pain or problem you may think you have, don't fight it, don't judge it. It is there for a reason. It is in this pain that your humanity is reinstated. When you can find something in the pain to be grateful for, you begin to heal and to modify your destiny.

When you feel whole and grateful for who you are and what you have at any given moment in your life, that's when the miracles happen.

END NOTES

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ABOUT THE AUTHOR



Waleuska Lazo is a passionate, expressive, engaging entrepreneur, writer, and mother of two with a flair for telling compelling, relevant, and thought-provoking stories. Her writing is raw and healing because it evokes a range of emotions and life-changing behavior in her readers. From her personal journey of self-development has come the mission to help women reclaim their natural power.

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Born in Nicaragua, Waleuska immigrated to Canada with her family as a teen. She earned a bachelor's degree and then a master's degree in criminal justice from the University of Toronto. In 1995, Waleuska cofounded Embanet, an e-learning provider of higher education, and sold it in 2007. In 2009, she cofounded the Magnum Opus Group. MOG builds homes for discerning home buyers, homes where dreams are born and legacies are made.

Waleuska's passion for writing led her to establish DreamCatcher Print in 2011. Through its aegis, she has published a series of books for young readers about real-life heroes, which inspire children to lead better lives.

Waleuska Lazo splits her time between homes in Hollywood, Florida, in the United States and Toronto, Ontario, in Canada.