

Dear Little Me:
Words of Love, Wisdom
and Guidance for
Life's Journey

A black and white photograph of a person standing on a rock in the ocean, looking out at the horizon. The person is wearing a dark coat and pants. The ocean is calm, and the horizon is visible in the distance.

MaryBeth Gustitus

Dear Me,

Hey kid, welcome to the world!

Before you get started on this amazing journey called life there are a few things I would like you to know. I hope it helps you prepare for the road ahead, and yet I am completely aware that that is not possible. But what the heck, I'll try anyway.

First of all, congratulations that you even made it.

Seriously, do you know how lucky you are that you are even here? You will forget the process thus far, and believe me, that is to your benefit. You are a freaking warrior. You don't know this, but deep inside of you was planted a reason for making this journey.

As you go through life, people will have lots of different names they will give this seedling: **purpose, passion, mission, "reason for being"** ...whatever you call it, know you have one. And, you should know that these seeds are planted at different levels, and sometimes they may be hard to find. I'm here to assure you that you do, indeed have one. So – keep looking until you find it. Please, don't be discouraged when you meet people that seem to find theirs easier and faster...not everything that has been planted blooms at the same time.

Look around the room at your Mom, Dad and anyone else that may be here to welcome you. See them crying? It's because they are not prepared to have their heart expand with such force that they can't breathe.

They suddenly see you and wonder what their life was like without you, even though they literally just met you. They already have a plan for your life. It's a good plan, an excellent plan really. One where you will be happy, healthy, successful, loving and kind. Their plan includes keeping you safe from harm and pain – any kind of pain.

They are so cute in thinking they actually have this ability, but believe me - at this moment, they really do think they can execute this plan. Time will show them otherwise. Remember those tears on their faces, you will see them again many times because of you. Most of those times, they will cry because of the joy and love they feel watching you grow.

They will cry because they are proud of you, they will cry because they are afraid for you, they will cry because they are angry with you, they will cry because they are terrified of failing you. Don't worry, no matter how much they cry, they will always continue to love you.

The next part of your life is quite fun and yet exhausting (for everyone). You are adorable and seriously, everyone ogles over a baby. People will take a deep breath to smell your new sweet skin. Everything you do for the first time is a miracle! Everyone is cheering you on as you learn how to take your first steps and say your first words and experience things for the very first time. Enjoy this, even though you won't remember it. Store it in your body as happy cells and keep it with you always, because, in the not-too-distant future, things are going to change.

People are not going to stop you on the street and ask how old you are forever (and trust me, you won't want them to). People are not going to smile and stare at you wherever you go because you are a wonder. Suddenly at one point, you may feel like people actually want you NOT to talk and walk so much – and you may feel that suddenly you are not so special after all. That is when you will need to find those happy cells you saved earlier and remember how special you are, regardless of how the world is reacting to you.

This part, my little friend, is really hard – some people, sadly, never can quite get it. But keep trying...I promise you it will be worth it. If for some reason, you aren't able to access those happy cells, you will spend way too much time trying to get people to ogle over you

and smell your skin hoping for the same response and it just doesn't work that way. And then, you may turn to more drastic and unhealthy measures to make yourself feel special and important and included...and that's where things can really go south. So, just do us all a favor and access those happy cells that have been stored for God sakes, and know that you are, always have been, and always will be, enough.

There will be a chapter of your life called "Adolescence". This, like any good story is what we like to call a "Plot Twist". Here, no one will understand you and you won't understand yourself. You will feel like you are crawling out of that skin that once smelled so sweet (and take that as a hint that maybe you don't smell like that anymore and need some help in this area). You will question everyone and everything, and mostly you will question yourself. All part of the plan I assure you. Remember the plan I told you about that your parents had for you? Yeah, this isn't it.

This plan is a surprise to all of you, and sometimes people don't like surprises. Remember those tears I told you about in the very beginning? They are coming around quite frequently now – and yet, they feel different. The people who cried with joy and happiness and wonder, now cry with angry red faces and veins bulging out of their necks. Before you ask...

yes, they love you anyway. It's just harder to see and feel that right now, but don't worry - it's still there. This part of the journey is hard, really hard...on everyone. You are all in the process of transferring power and control and that is not easy. You are going to want it, and yet you don't have it. Your loved ones are not going to give it up that easily. This part of the plan includes starting the process of separation - and to want to separate from the love bubble you have lived in for the early part of your life, we first must make things unbearably uncomfortable. Hang on, its going to be a bumpy ride. Soon the ride will come to a complete stop and you will be free to roam about the cabin as you wish - its called becoming an adult.

Now, to the untrained eye you have had up to this point, "Adulthood" looked pretty sweet. Upon closer examination, you will learn you may have misjudged it. What looked like freedom, power and control is actually responsibilities and pressure? Book doesn't match the cover, right? I know, and I'm sorry. It's just that if we told you that this is what it would be, you may have chickened out (like the time you waited an hour to ride that roller coaster and embarrassed yourself by walking off the platform when it was your turn). Kinda like that. And, let's be honest, you did always regret not getting on that roller coaster.

This chapter is (hopefully) your longest. It will have many more plot twists. This is the period where, with a lot of work and little luck, that little seed of purpose is coming to bloom. If it doesn't, you have been hardwired with emotions to trigger your knowing it hasn't reached the surface. The hardwiring process is a bit of a grab bag, so I'm not exactly sure which emotion will show up for you; sadness, anger, regret, disappointment, envy, frustration...and there are others too. It will be so easy for you to think that these emotions are caused by other people and that you are a victim – that's a rookie mistake. Here's the inside tip; its you..its all you. Most people wont know this secret and will spend their lives blaming others for what is happening to them, but not you and not now. You know better, and I expect you to be better. So, if your purpose is a late bloomer, get your shovel out and start digging. Trust me, it's in there – I saw it planted there with my own eyes.

I can't tell you everything else that will happen, but I can give you some random thoughts to prepare you for the chapters not yet revealed. Take what you need, leave what you don't.

Stop thinking you can control everything; don't beat yourself up when things go wrong, and for the love of God stop doing an endzone dance when things have worked out. You are not in nearly as much control as you think you are.

Good things will happen, and bad people will want to take the joy from you. Bad things will happen, and good people will want to take the pain from you. Funny how that works.

There are so many people,
experiences and things in your life to
remember. Most of them are amazing
and wonderful, some of them are not.
You will tend to focus on the latter...
stop that.

Everything is possible
and yet nothing is
guaranteed.

Who you hang out
with matters. A lot.

You should continue to learn every day...learning shouldn't be left only to the early chapters of your life.

Never let anyone make you stop talking when you have something to say

Have courage to be honest with yourself and others

Stop trying to make everyone happy.
Just hope your happiness inspires their
happiness. But be clear, you will
never, ever, ever CREATE their
happiness, but you just might inspire it.

Listen to yourself more and others less.
Only you know what has been planted
for you, and not every garden is the
same. What is true for others, may not
be true for you.

Stop worrying so much about how you look. An unhappy spirit can make a beautiful face appear ugly and the reverse is true as well. So, work on your spirit and stop worrying about your face.

On your journey of life, you should never give someone else the keys to the car (but you can welcome them to ride shotgun)

Don't take yourself so seriously. Visit a Cemetery – it is a great equalizer.

When you hold the hand of a dying loved one, you will realize that the material things you worked so hard for don't really matter much at all. Consider working for experiences and people more than stuff that someone else will sell in a yard sale after you are gone.

Talk to yourself more, you have really good advice.

Stop watching so much TV – there are so many real life stories that you are missing.

Take a nap every now and then. Cats know something you don't.

Love an animal. They tend to show you for who you really are.

You don't know when "the first time" and "the last time" will happen in your life. Focus on the things that matter to you while you have them. It will allow you to YES to new opportunities when "the first time" appears, and to savor beautiful memories when "the last time" has arrived. Life is best when we limit regret.

Feed your brain every day with something that is healthy and good.

Stop complaining.

Remember that everyone,
including you, is doing
their best at any moment.
Stop judging.

Remember that you need joyful
moments, painful moments, scary
moments, and silly moments to make
up a full life. If you try to avoid one,
you will wipe out some of the others
and that is not worth the trade.

Set a goal to do something
each day that someone says
thank you for as they drift off
to sleep.

Life will sucker punch you sometimes. It
may literally take the wind right out of
you for an undetermined length of time.
It's ok to take some time lying on the floor
looking at the ceiling thinking about what
is next, but just don't take too long doing
it. The longer you lay there, the harder it is
to get up. And, don't be afraid to ask for
help in getting back on your feet.

Be grateful for everything.
Even though you may not like
whatever lesson is being
served to you, say thank you
for the meal.

You are loved,
so be loving.

Whatever life gives you
was meant for you. Stop
wishing it were different
and deal with what is.

Stop thinking there is something wrong with you. There isn't something wrong with you. You are as perfect as perfect can be (and nothing is perfect).

Whatever happens, don't quit. Not on the important stuff. It's ok to quit the stupid stuff like the accordion lesson your mother made you take when you were in grade school. You just can't quit the big stuff, like going after your deeply planted purpose.

I can't tell you more and spoil the surprises that are ahead and I hope you can accept that. I hope that you can have gratitude and joy for the good seasons you will be given. I hope you have grit, and patience and grace for the difficult seasons that will inevitably come your way. You were born and raised in New England and Lord knows you understand that seasons can change quickly, sometimes even in the same day. You also know that spring always follows winter, and regardless of how dark and cold the winter may be, it doesn't stay forever.

And always remember, I love you.

ME.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of the letters 'M' and 'B' in a cursive, stylized font. The 'M' is tall and narrow, and the 'B' is shorter and wider, with a loop at the bottom.

About The Author

MaryBeth "MB" Gustitus is an entrepreneur, coach, leader, educator, and motivational speaker, who has dedicated over three decades of her life to empowering individuals and organizations to unlock their true potential. With a wealth of experience in leadership, sales management, coaching, speaking, and training, MB has become a trusted authority in the personal and professional development space.

Throughout her career, MB has earned a reputation for her exceptional ability to inspire and guide others in discovering their purpose, passion, and personal superpower. As a professional coach and a Master Practitioner of Neuro-Linguistic Programming (NLP), Mental and Emotional Release® (MER), and Hypnotherapy, she employs a holistic approach to help individuals break through limitations, overcome obstacles, and achieve extraordinary results.

With a deep understanding of human behavior and dynamics, MB is also a Certified Behavioral Analyst with DISC, enabling her to delve into the intricacies of team dynamics and individual performance. She specializes in leveraging DISC Behavioral Analysis to enhance teamwork, cultivate effective leadership skills, and foster a high-performance culture within organizations.

A stylized, handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of the letters 'MB' in a cursive, flowing script.

Want To Connect?



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A handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of the letters 'M' and 'B' in a stylized, cursive font.