



JABULA

**A Synopsis
of Five
Life Changing Challenges**

Be More. Live More. In Purpose

Emra Smith

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About the Author

Emra Smith is known as the inspirational challenger - Speaker, Trainer, Life Coach and Author for Leaders to facilitate change. She is Founder & CEO of Love Living Today. Emra lives with her husband in Savannah, GA and loves to visit their mountain home in Linville Falls, NC. She was born and raised in South Africa and travels much for her speaking and training appointments.

Emra started speaking, teaching & coaching as a teen and continued to do so throughout her Marketing & Sales career finally doing it full time in the Hospitality industry where she has trained many brands for the past several years as well doing customized Customer Service training for the City of Key West, FL.

Emra has often spoken for various organizations, church groups and wins numerous ribbons at Toastmasters.

In 2010, Emra started her own business and has differentiated herself through her unique and powerful inspirational speaking which is poured into any given topic or training. She evokes a sense of calm and trust, yet ignites passion and action as she challenges the audience to live more, be more and move forward in purpose.

JABULA

- To Live Happily -

A Synopsis of the 5 Life Changing Challenges

Jabula means to live happily in the Zulu language in South Africa.

Born and raised in South Africa, one of the greatest gifts I received was the innate ability to live happily. If you visit the country you will feel the joy in every fiber of your being. The broad smiles will captivate you, the hearty hello's and genuine care for your wellbeing warm your soul. The music will move you into a rhythm that will pulsate through you with an energy you will feel long after you leave.

During life's journey our adherence to our core values are challenged and we learn so much about them and the impact they have on our lives. For me the many learning experiences of understanding my core value of living happily has taught me the essence of how to achieve it.

It seems to me that for many others this pursuit of happiness is a heartfelt need and longing as well. Happiness can take on many forms – joy, laughter, achievement of goals and dreams, business and personal success, having our needs or wants met, making a difference in the world and a slew of so much more.

Whatever living happily means to you, these 5 life changing challenges have a powerful impact on your achievement of happiness. I do know it takes much courage and strength to live more, be more and move forward in purpose to achieve extraordinary happiness.

Do you want to live more, be more and move forward in purpose to achieve extraordinary happiness?

Here's how to do so:

The 1st Life Changing Challenge:

No more complaining for 21 days!

- This does not mean that you pretend that nothing's wrong. It does mean that you stop, pause and reflect for as long as it takes to understand why you are upset, angry or annoyed by a situation or person.
- YOU TAKE FULL RESPONSIBILITY for every action you take. No blaming of someone else or your environment.
- It IS YOUR CHOICE to how you respond.
- You choose CHANGE or ACCEPTANCE of the situation you're in and deal with the consequences either way.
- NO COMPLAINING. You've made a choice after contemplating the experience and the outcome and know why you choose what you do and the reasons for it.

You may catch yourself falling into your pattern of complaining the first week. Don't get discouraged, just start again. That's why it's 21 days. It takes that long to form a new habit and sometimes it takes many 21 day intervals to change our habits. Complaining is merely a habit. A destructive habit that doesn't make anything better. It steals your joy and makes happiness an elusive experience.

The Power of not Complaining:

As a young girl I despised sweating. In my world there was no such word as perspiration, just nasty sweat. Running even halfway around the track at school was such a dreaded experience. I couldn't even breathe after the first quarter lap.

In my late twenties, being a mom of a mentally challenged daughter, I was introduced to running. The journey of doing whatever it takes began. The repetition, one step and then the next – walk-run, run-walk, until eventually I could run a mile and then three and then five. I learned to love to sweat and feel the tenderness in my muscles.

In the years that followed I'd go in and out of running, being fit and healthy and then taking it easy again which resulted in gaining a few unwanted pounds. Before I knew it, I was two dress sizes bigger, quite irritable and not feeling good about who I was. I longed for those years when I was slim, trim and had boundless energy.

I couldn't exercise because my husband had knee issues, then surgery and because much of our together time was when exercising, I needed to stay home with him. Another thing was that I hated the humidity and it seemed that most of the year was hot and humid and mosquito invested so I couldn't go outside. On and on the complaining went, one excuse after another and I just got more and more miserable.

This affected everyone I knew and I found myself complaining about so much more. My work, my colleagues, everything. My complaining frame of mind infiltrated every corner of my life. I lost my Jabula. Happiness was hard to find.

Through the masterful coaching of Dr. Dave Krueger, I started the process of understanding my core values, my life story and it's lingering impact on my life. I learnt new ways of goal setting and change. I signed up to run a half marathon with Team N Training, raising funds for the fight against Leukemia & Lymphoma as I trained.

Instead of my habit of complaining, I realized what was going on in my life, decided I wanted more and sought the help I needed to facilitate change.

I had choices – I could work out my schedule so that I both exercised and had time for my husband and realized that he didn't need a baby sitter. I could get a treadmill, go to the gym or run skillfully in the heat. I started training and with discipline and perseverance I became strong, healthy and happy again and fulfilled a dream of running a half marathon! And a second and in training for one again!



Nashville, TN Women's Half Marathon



Miami, FL ING Half Marathon

Are you ready to not complain for 21 days and live more, be more and move forward in purpose?

The 2nd Life Changing Challenge:

A Personal Affirmation & Gratitude Journal for 21 days

To live happily – experience your Jabula, it needs to come from deep inside you.

Now that you're living your new habit of not complaining, taking responsibility for each aspect of your life you may very well still be wondering where the happiness and joy is. Your choices may be overwhelming, confusing and even scary. When you stop blaming others or experiences you've thrown out what has filled each corner of your being and that empty space needs to be filled!

Filled with what? With the wonder of who you are and the thrill of saying thank you.

- Every evening before going to bed, or upon rising, or even grabbing a moment during the day, you write down what you did that was good, great or amazing. "Wow, I actually only complained once today".
- You then add: "I rock! Good going _____ (add your name)!" You affirm yourself, using whatever language you use when you're excited about something.
- Just let it pour out. The first few times you may find you start thinking back at things you've accomplished, changes that have occurred and you write and write and write. Eventually you may only write a paragraph some days.
- After you have noticed your great actions and affirmed yourself, you say thank you.
I thank God for letting me notice, for bringing about change, for giving strength and courage, for making me who I am becoming.
- Saying thanks or expressing gratitude strengthens your affirmation as it turns your eyes to a greater place than yourself and brings balance.

Some people really struggle to do this, if you do seek help. Get someone you trust who can help you see your greatness, or join one of my coaching programs. The investment in yourself either through taking the time to do this or paying for further support will change your life.

The Power of Writing Personal Affirmations & Giving Thanks:

When I stepped out of my marriage of 25 years, heartbroken and self-loathing, I invested in myself and went for counseling. Here I was asked to write a self-love statement, look in the mirror and say it to myself many times a day. I couldn't do it! Over a period of many months I realized that I never really thought much about me as life was always about giving and cheering others on.

I went about it in a creative way, picked a song I loved, "I Feel Pretty" from Westside Story and played it when I drove from here to there and belted it out as loud as I could.

Eventually I could look in the mirror and say my statement to me. My healing continued as I started working with a Mentor Coach and I thought I was all healed.

A year later I was at a women's conference and whilst speaking to a wonderful woman Joyce O'Brian, the topic of my erratic exercise habits surfaced. She asked me why I thought it was so and I realized that I still accommodate the habits of others before my own essential lifestyle needs. She then asked me if I would promise her that for the next 21 days I would write down personal affirmations. I happily agreed and was so shocked to see how difficult it was for me at first. Once I uncorked the bottle – I wrote and wrote and wrote. I realized how many amazing things I have done and the big and small accomplishments I achieved each day. I could say thank you and realize who and what God had created me to be. My gratitude overflowed and as my eyes turned upward, not inward, my outward look on life changed.

My strength to say yes to what mattered soared. I started seeing my dreams in a clearer light and had the courage to move forward with them. My happiness exploded and I was able to be more to others than ever before without sacrificing who I was.



I feel pretty,
Oh, so pretty,
I feel pretty and witty and bright!
And I pity
Any girl who isn't me tonight.

I feel charming,
Oh, so charming
It's alarming how charming I feel!
And so pretty
That I hardly can believe I'm real.

See the pretty girl in that mirror there:
Who can that attractive girl be?
Such a pretty face,
Such a pretty dress,
Such a pretty smile,
Such a pretty me!
"I feel pretty" West Side Story Lyrics
Photo by Vaneli Gisela

Are you ready to start your 21 day Affirmation & Gratitude Journal and be more, live more and move forward in your purpose?

The 3rd Life Changing Challenge:

Having a Dream Journal

Not complaining, taking responsibility for your life in every situation, affirming yourself and having an attitude of gratitude opens up your whole being to be more. You can dream bigger and see things so much clearer. It's not enough however to just daydream and long for things and experiences. You need to know that you can achieve them and that there are skills to facilitate this.

- Create a dream journal, a workbook where you can write your dreams in. Mine is divided into 3 sections – small dreams, big dreams and yes-possible dreams. I check off a dream when it happens and I continuously add to them.
- Share your dreams with someone who supports you. When we say them out loud something happens internally – you acknowledge that you're serious and your choices start taking on a direction to facilitate that dream.
- Envision your dream – take it to the next level. See it happening. The brain truly is a powerful entity and brilliant at that. The more you 'see' it, the more you enable your mind to configure ways to achieve it and grab hold of opportunities as they come your way.
- Learn to understand your inner conversations that discourage you, spend time to understand why they're there trying to create obstacles to diminish your dreams. Get help or coaching to rise above them.
- Set SMART goals to achieve your dreams. Strategic planning becomes essential for some of our dreams. Your goals need to be Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic and Time-bound. For each goal set 3 key next-steps to move you toward your goal. You keep going till you reach it.

Eventually dreams that seem unrealistic become possible when you hold them before you, break them down into small chunks and never give up. Dig deep, ponder often and uncover your heart's deepest longings.

The Power of having a dream journal:

When I was younger I'd pretend I was a movie star and saw myself traveling the world making a difference for those in need. Those dreams were like clouds in the sky to get lost in and then return to the reality of the world around me. Not reality. Somehow as the years came and went, little aspects of what it makes to make that dream a reality became part of my life. I'd speak, teach and learn with energy and passion and not be afraid to accept opportunities in far away places. I was mostly told that I think too big, talk too much and need to focus more with what's at hand.

I'd try and conform and be sensible and became confused about my inner longings and what was expected of me. I kept growing and achieved smaller dreams but stopped accessing the clouds and the dreams tucked in there. Slowly but surely I just lived a daily life of survival losing my heart and soul.

As you know by now I took responsibility for my life, made painful changes, learned to affirm who I was, gave thanks from the new well of life in me and uncovered my dreams. Life's experiences, mentors and starting a dream journal skyrocketed me with my feet firmly grounded and living amongst my clouds.



Mountain Home
Big dream fulfilled



Skydiving
Small dream fulfilled

Are you ready to start your dream journal, overcome obstacles, believe and see them come true?

The 4th Life Changing Challenge:

Living a Healthy & Balanced Lifestyle

We all know that when we are ill even if it's just the flu, we don't feel too happy. The longer we are ill, the worse it gets. Productivity, attitude, energy and at times even the meaning of life is challenged. Being healthy with natural energy makes every day sparkle. In turn we spread that around and positively affect those around us.

As fun is so much part of living a balanced lifestyle and being happy, let's play with the word JABULA as an acronym as building blocks to living a balanced physical, emotional and spiritual lifestyle to be happy:

J Joyful eating

Choose a healthy diet. For example choose eating less sugar, fat and salt

A Activity

Exercise regularly

B Balance

Balance all aspects of work, life and play including having adequate rest

U Up there

Get just enough sunshine & plenty of fresh air

L Laughter

Laugh numerous times every day

A Attitude

Have a positive attitude of mind, thankfulness and spirituality.
Don't complain, take responsibility for your life, be thankful, affirm yourself, have dreams, give to others

The Power of Living a Healthy & Balanced Lifestyle:

Raising a mentally challenged daughter, immigrating to a strange country, unexpectedly losing my Mom, my eldest daughter leaving for college and getting divorced, had multiple stressful moments. During those extreme times I leaned heavily into exercise and healthy eating. I never had to lean on medications, alcohol or drugs as headaches or overwhelm in coping never plagued me. I believe that being healthy and fit saw me through.

My challenge came when life treated me good and I'd fall off the wagon so to speak. This affected me subconsciously emotionally and mentally. As my weight increased my confidence would drop, I'd start complaining and my joyful attitude lessened. I'd experience a lack of the natural energy I loved which deepened my apathy and discontent.

Thankfully I have moved beyond the yo-yo living from health to abandon and back. I did the inner work we've spoken about and I now embrace and love living a balanced and healthy lifestyle. I truly experience JABULA!

Are you ready to take the challenge to embrace and live a healthy and balanced lifestyle?

The 5th Life Changing Challenge:

Giving

It is a common principle in both the Christian and Non-Christian world that if you give you receive. This should just be the extra, the gift in return that says thank you, not the reason for giving. Giving from the heart is what makes a difference not only to those around you but to YOU. There's an unseen equation about giving, a law of cause and effect. You get you give, you give, you get. It's powerful.

- Give 10% of your income to a worthy cause or causes. You may want to split it up.
- Give 10% of your time to a worthy cause. If you're awake 16 hours of the day, spend 1.6 hours of your time giving it away. Perhaps you send a note, make a caring phone call, help someone in need, volunteer, raise funds. The list is endless. Some days you may do a few hours a day and you measure it per week or month.
- Give where no return to you is expected. That's the difference between giving and business. Giving is not a business transaction.
- To give is to pour your richness into the open space of another
- Give of your strengths, your gifts and talents. You should be earning from them, also share 10% of them for free.
- Give to yourself as well. Feed your mind, take time to rest and rejuvenate and get something you love for yourself. You become of little use when you are depleted and have no more to give.

Giving is infectious.

Something changes each time we give whether it's the receiver or you the giver. Equally so when we are given to. So many times the acts of giving and receiving in our lives are not aligned and we don't even see the law at work. As you do your affirmation & thanks journaling and start a disciplined giving program you will see this unspoken law at work in your life.

The Power of Giving:

One of my Core Values is giving. It gives me childlike joy to share with others. My most prominent Love Language is that of receiving and giving gifts. I smile just thinking of a beautifully decorated gift box.

For me to give was as easy as breathing. On the other hand, receiving was a little more difficult. Birthday's and special occasions were there for me to receive, but I'd be quiet overwhelmed outside of that at receiving anything. In fact, I'd never ask for anything, if I couldn't do it myself, I'd do without. This would include struggling with schoolwork, piano

lessons, carrying heavy bags, warmth, tenderness, love and so much more. I was a little island of strength all by myself. Oh boy, I sure have reaped the consequences of those beliefs. When I reached my early 40's I was depleted, exhausted and fell apart. If there is one thing I could change in my life it would be to have learned early on to take better care of my needs. Thankfully I healed and recovered.

My husband Robert further challenged me in my journey of self respect and giving to me. My old habits of being the caretaker and putting others first would pop up often and he'd call me on it. An example is that say I wanted to go out with my girlfriends to a movie, I'd talk to him about it to see if he's okay with it. He'd look at me, frown and say 'why are you asking me to go?' and I'd explain that I figured it's respectful as it's taking from our together time. He'd simply tell me to do whatever I'd like to do. I'd say 'well what if that upsets you?' and he'd tell me that that would be his problem to get over and really had nothing to do with me.

It took me some time to own this deep respect of giving and receiving for myself and it's impact on others. I learned that often one's giving enables another's weakness to disable them. It takes much courage and strength to set boundaries of mutual respect, when to give and when to receive. It is a humbling experience that in the end facilitates deep inner happiness.

Are you ready to take the challenge of giving?

- *Learn more about the 5 Life Changing Challenges at: <http://www.lovelivingtoday.net>*
- *Become part of the conversation and get support at: <http://www.facebook.com/emrasmith>*
- *Get the resources you need to be more, live more and live in purpose from the Expert panel their products, coaching and mentoring & inspirational articles at: <http://www.lovelivingtoday.net>*

JABULA my Friend!

I pray that you will join us on this journey to live more, be more and live in purpose.

Emra Smith