

# Becoming a LifeChanger



Move Away from Ordinary

Tammy Helfrich

# *Becoming a LifeChanger*

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by Tammy Helfrich

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## Introduction

Take a minute, and think of someone who has inspired you.

What was unique about them?

What did they say or do that impacted you?

Would you say that they have changed your life or the life of someone around you?

People who live inspiring lives motivate me. There is something incredibly energizing about their presence. I love hearing about their dreams, passions, and even the obstacles they have overcome because that is often where the inspiration started.

In the details of their stories. Life changing stories.

I call these people **LifeChangers**.

I believe we need to celebrate these amazing people and their stories. I started a series on my blog specifically to highlight and share these details. My goal was to celebrate people who are living differently. People who are just like us; yet, they made a decision to do something different. They stepped out of their normal lives. And in the process, they have changed their lives and often the lives of others around them.

LifeChangers are not perfect. They have just come to a point in their life where the average life is no longer enough. They want something more. Something unique. They moved away from the status quo to make a difference.

I believe we can all be LifeChangers. We can move away from ordinary.

## Enough of Mediocre

It's impossible to meet Tom and not notice it: he's different. His energy is unique. He and his wife adopted three children from three different countries. And his story doesn't stop there.

For many years, Tom had a successful contracting business, and also coached football. He dealt with people from all different backgrounds and saw a continuing trend that truly bothered him. He saw too many people living ordinary lives with entitlement mentalities. He saw people who expected to be successful without putting in the work. He saw people who thought they were entitled to special privileges for no reason. Tom grew tired of seeing individuals not living or performing up to their potential.

*He was tired of watching people be mediocre.*

He was tired of mediocre service, which is far too common, and he was tired of watching people settle for average lives. I've known people who were frustrated with mediocrity before, and typically, they continue to live differently and exclude themselves from others, even to the extent of looking down on people who don't have the same mentality.

*Not Tom.*

He knew there was a better way, and he wanted others to know about it, too.

# What is a LifeChanger?

A LifeChanger is someone like you and me, who decided to do something different.

They decided to change their life or the lives of others around them.

They are inspiring.

They are making an impact right where they are.

They are passionate.

They are full of life.

And they are willing to share their stories.

## What's wrong with ordinary?

When we are young, we believe we can do anything. We dream big and don't let anyone tell us we can't do something.

Think about your life now.

Do you still believe that?

If you do, that's awesome!

But if you don't, **it's okay.**

***You're not alone.***

Most of us have been there at one time or another. In fact, most of us have settled for it. We've stopped dreaming. We've stopped believing we can make a difference.

## Why?

Maybe life got in the way.

Maybe marriage, career, kids, debt, job loss, illness, or just the craziness of life has left you stuck. Every day may feel the same. It feels like Groundhog Day over and over and over.

Or maybe it's overwhelming. There are so many needs in the world and so many things that you want to accomplish. How could you possibly do them all? How could you afford it? It's exhausting just thinking about it.

Or maybe you were told you had to be responsible. A responsible person gets a secure job and doesn't rock the boat. You've been told that dreaming doesn't pay the bills. You have been asked, "Who are you to do that?" These are all things that many of us have heard from well-meaning friends or family.

Or maybe you don't consider yourself a leader. Who would listen to you? Why would someone be inspired by you?

Or maybe you are thinking that people like this are "perfect" and that is definitely not you. Do you think they have it all figured out? Do you think they never have bad days?

Or maybe you think they had the perfect plan before starting their dream and becoming so inspiring.

When we often read or hear about successful people, we get tricked into thinking many of these things. We get tricked into thinking, "I could never do that. Their lives are always great. They don't struggle like the rest of us."

*We get tricked into comparing our beginning to their middle.*

*We see their highlight video instead of their practice video.*

***And this is unfair to us.***

Everyone has to start somewhere. At some point, these inspiring people made a decision to be different. I don't know any LifeChangers who haven't struggled at one time or another with various challenges. And many times, they continue to struggle. But their stories are very powerful because they overcame challenges to get to where they are and they continue to keep moving forward.



## What if there is more?

What if there is more to life than just existing?

What if you lived into who you really are?

What would it look like if you truly believed you could make a difference?

What if you have underestimated what you *do have* while focusing on what you don't have?

What would it look like if you could change your life?

If you started dreaming again?

What if there is something that needs to be created and only you can create it?

Would you still want an ordinary life?

## What's fear got to do with it?

One thing I know is that when you start to think differently and make changes towards an uncommon life, fear will be there. It shows up in full force. It will tell you those lies over and over if you let it.

So be ready for it.

I love what [Jon Acuff](#) shares about fear.

*"Fear only shows up when you're doing something that matters."*

*"Fear always wants you to give more of today to your past."*

*"Fear isolates you."*

*"Fear fears community."*

Fear is something we all struggle with from time to time. It can be particularly strong when we are moving away from an ordinary life. If you let it, fear will get a grip on you and keep you from starting. It can also show up after you've started and scream, "What have you done?!"

It will tell you that it's too late. You're too old, too broke, and you can't change.

It will tell you that it's too early. You're not ready, you're too young, and you don't know what you are doing.

Fear will be there. It's up to you to decide if you want to face it head on or let it control you.

Fear is a liar.

## Taking Steps

You are not a product in an assembly line. You are a human being. You were made for more than an ordinary, mundane life.

*You were created to be extraordinary.*

And contrary to what you may have heard, it's never too late.

I believe that we all have great purpose and potential. I believe we were made to be so much more than ordinary. We were made to be creative. We were each given unique talents and contributions that we need to bring to the world.

Do you believe that?

I do. And I believe it is true of **YOU**, too.

I believe we each have a story to tell and a mark to make on this world. It may be through art or music or writing or serving others or any number of different things. If you think back through your life, you may already know what it is. But you also may have stopped believing it mattered.

I believe that we need to rediscover our dreams and focus on understanding ourselves better so that we can then make an impact on the world. When we start living into the uniqueness of who we were created to be, we can't help but spread joy and inspire others in the process.

Think about the thing that you can't NOT do. Think about what brings you great joy. Think about what makes time stand still. Think about what makes you feel alive. Think about what makes you YOU.

Sometimes, the thing that we need to do to inspire and help others comes from what we might consider a painful place or a place of weakness. And that may scare us. However, it may be the very thing that we can do to help others realize they are not alone.

Take some time right now and think through this. What steps can you take to better understand some of these things? How can you start incorporating these thoughts and dreams into your life now?

“Our potential doesn’t always flow from a place of strength. It often comes from weakness, pain or failure. “ Scott Hodge

## **LifeChanger stories**

I have a friend named Mary. She is a Mom with grown kids. She has always loved taking pictures. But her career is in Corporate Training, and she doesn’t consider herself creative in her day job. She works hard and enjoys it, but it doesn’t ignite a fire in her like photography does.

So what did she do? She decided to step out of her comfort zone and do something different. She decided to share her photography for the first time. This was a huge and frightening step. What would people think? Would they like it? Would they hate it?

She chose to display her photography for the first time during a local art walk. And guess what? People liked it. And appreciated it. She even ended up winning the People’s Choice award. Mary felt alive and excited. She chose to share beauty by showing her art to the world.

I have another friend named Joy. She has a hereditary eye disease that has impacted her vision since childhood. It has been a very difficult road for her as she faces daily challenges most of us cannot imagine. She is a mother of two young girls and is an amazing woman. She started to find herself feeling discontent, irritated, and depressed because of all the things she could no longer do. But instead of staying in that mindset, she chose to do something. She has chosen to face her disease head on and share her experiences through writing.

She and her twin sister (who also has the disease) started a blog, [www.doublevisionblog.com](http://www.doublevisionblog.com). They have helped countless people see their lives differently through their honest words about living life with a chronic condition. They have chosen to tell their stories to help spread awareness and encourage others who are struggling with a similar condition. They want to give others a glimpse of what daily living looks like for them. They want to empower others to live life fully, regardless of the challenges you face. They have chosen a LifeChanger attitude.

I have another friend named Terri. She went to a routine doctor's appointment in her mid-40's. Her doctor started asking about her family history. After she named a laundry list of health challenges that her family has faced, her doctor looked at her and frankly said, "That could be you."

His message cut straight to her heart. He was right. She was overweight and unhealthy. She needed to change her future or she would be facing the same health issues. So what did she do? Did she go home and drown herself in a carton of ice cream? No. She committed to change.

She joined Weight Watchers the next day and decided to start moving. She went for a walk. It was one lap around a small parking lot. It was all she could do. But she did it. The next day, she walked farther. She educated herself on eating healthier. She continued walking every day. Then, one day she decided to try to jog. She surprised herself by how much she enjoyed it and how proud she was for finishing it.

Today, two years later, Terri is 75 pounds lighter, has completed multiple 5Ks, 10Ks, 15Ks, and two half marathons. She has inspired numerous people to live healthier, join Weight Watchers, move more, start running, and to change their life.

I have another friend named Andi. She has had a dream for most of her life. Her dream was to own a home that would provide respite from life for artists and creatives. Her dream was to have land where people could rest, and be close to nature. She's in the middle of this dream right now.

She recently released a beautiful manifesto titled [God's Whisper Manifesto: The Making of a Dream](#). It details the vision she has for her farm, and also helps support her dream. It is a beautiful example of how she is taking steps to make her dream happen. Watching her live out her dream has been so inspiring to me, and many others. I can't wait to visit God's Whisper soon.

I have another friend named Laura. She lives in Nashville, and started noticing how musicians were throwing away guitar strings. Due to the mixture of metals, guitar strings cannot be recycled. This didn't seem right to her, and she wanted to do something about it.

When Laura looked at guitar strings, she didn't just see them for what they were. She saw unique characteristics in each of them. She imagined them as beautiful pieces of jewelry. So, she started turning them into art. She sold them at art festivals and online.

But, Laura decided that was not enough. She also wanted to do something to help the local food banks. Too many people are hungry in her community, and she wanted a way to help change that. Each piece of jewelry that is purchased from [Strings for Hope](#) also helps provide food to those in need. What an incredible way to give back in multiple ways.

*I have friends who:*

Started non-profit organizations to help mentor inner city youth

Took non-disposable items and repurposed them into something beautiful

Left their corporate jobs to help bring awareness to mission organizations

Started bands to create unique music

Lost weight and inspired others to join them

Wrote books to help fund charitable contributions

Built a farm to provide rest and rejuvenation to artists

Adopted special needs children

Started foundations to grant last wishes

Chose to be a LifeChanger within their families

Decided to love the city they are in and live in community with their neighbors

Started movements to show grace over judgment

## And what about Tom?

Remember Tom? He is the one that said, “Enough of mediocre.”

If you’re familiar with football, you know that men are often described with phrases like “he’s got a motor.” It means they are uncommon. It means they have a work ethic and an effort that stands out. They are not necessarily the most talented players on the team. *But they are the ones who outwork everyone.*

Tom knew there was something to this idea. He had seen it in people who were living uncommon lives. It was the message that he wanted to share with others. Although he wasn’t sure of every detail, he took action. He developed the brand [MOTOR](#).

MOTOR started out as an apparel company specifically to share the message and mindset of MOTOR. His goal was to inspire others to bring their MOTOR to whatever they do. Several years later, it has now become a motivational speaking and business coaching company helping people to see, lead, and execute in uncommon ways.

Tom is paying it forward. He’s helping others see that life is anything but ordinary.



## **Finding other LifeChangers**

Living the life of a LifeChanger can be challenging at first. Not everyone will be thrilled with your new mindset and dreams. In fact, some of those closest to you may never understand it.

That's why it's important to find other LifeChangers. It's important to find people who understand what it's like to dream. People who will support you and encourage you. People who will help you continue to take steps forward.

### **Where are these people?**

You may be surprised to learn that they are right around you. Sometimes, they are not obvious. And sometimes they are. You can start to find them by being open about your dreams and visions. Share them with others. And be sure to ask about their dreams. This is a great way to start a conversation.

Find a community of people who are doing something similar to what you want to do. Reach out to them. Ask them questions. Do some research. People are often afraid to ask for help or reach out to someone that they admire or look up to. What do you have to lose? If they say no, then, you move on and ask someone else.

There are online communities forming all the time around authors and leaders and speakers who are sharing this message of hope and living your best life. You can follow their blogs or Facebook groups and connect with people who understand the message and are working to change their life.

You can also connect with people in your community. People you know through church or your neighborhood or other affiliations. Start meeting with people and having conversations about LifeChanger topics. You will be amazed at how energized you will feel to know that you are not alone.

## The Next Step

“I may not know all the steps, but I know the next right one.” Bob Goff

It's time to start. This is where you get to figure out who you really are. You get to challenge yourself to do something different.

***You get to take a step. One step.***

And that step looks different for all of us.

It may be your time to:

Start a business

Commit to a healthy lifestyle

Empower others

Start the process to adopt

Begin a blog

Write that book

Volunteer

Help a neighbor

Mentor a teen

Dream again

Whatever it is, I challenge you to take a step.

Just one step. Not fifty steps. One step.

You don't need the entire plan figured out. You don't need to know every step that will be required of you in the months to come. You just need to take a step forward. You can't learn to swim without jumping in the water first.

Go ahead. Take a step towards a new life. Take a step towards becoming a LifeChanger.

I know you can do it. **Believe it.**

You can be a LifeChanger!

# Thank you

Thank you for taking the time to read this book. I would love to continue the conversation with you and help encourage you on your journey.

I'd also love to hear your thoughts.

What did you think?

Did I miss something?

How can I help you?

I'd also love to hear your LifeChanger stories. It could be about you or a LifeChanger who has inspired you. You can submit your story online at [www.tammyhelfrich.com/lifechangerthebook](http://www.tammyhelfrich.com/lifechangerthebook) or email the story to [tammy@tammyhelfrich.com](mailto:tammy@tammyhelfrich.com).

## Wow. Where do I begin?

I want to say a special thank you to people who have been so encouraging to me on my own journey. Thank you to my amazing pastors, mentors and friends, Scott and Amanda Hodge, and Larry Boatright. Your leadership and examples have helped shape me in so many ways. Many of these ideas started from your leadership, direction, and investment in me. I am so thankful for you.

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Thank you to Jon Acuff, who helped me learn to dream again and finally understand that my dream really matters. Thank you to incredible people like Ben Arment, Michael Hyatt, Jeff Goins, Dave Gibbons, Al Andrews, Donald Miller, and Bob Goff whose words and teachings inspire me to challenge traditional thinking and to take action. You have been secret mentors to me and helped me make my own move away from ordinary.

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And most importantly, thank you to my husband Rick and my family. You are my world and bless me so much. Thank you for letting me dream with you and for encouraging me no matter what I do. I love you.

## About the Author



Tammy Helfrich is a wife, mom, daughter and friend. She writes about life, marriage, encouragement, and LifeChanger stories. She loves connecting with people and rallying them around a good cause. She is passionate about helping others realize that their voice and dreams matter. She encourages you to embrace your story and to become a LifeChanger.

She lives with her husband and two sons in Illinois. She works for a Fortune 500 company by day and is a writer in her spare time. You can typically find her spending time with her family (usually on bikes), working out, being an activist, serving her church and community, or writing.

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