

# MOMENTS OF GRACE: INTRODUCTION

Imagine we are weavers, each given a chance to weave magnificent designs, whatever our minds can fathom. Our threads vary in color, length, width, and texture. Some of us assume incorrectly that we have odd pieces, knotted, frayed, and therefore we believe we cannot weave or even conceive a beautiful design.

Regardless of how bad things may look to us, we must weave with great faith, enthusiasm, and joy! If we do this, we will see that even the frayed and faded thread can create a most glorious tapestry. This is the way life is. We create our cloth with the choices we make, the patterns we weave, the thread we choose to add to those we are given. If at any time we do not like what we have made, we can change. We move one thread, and the entire cloth is changed. We move another. And another. Until we have woven a new fabric, or life, for ourselves.

The pain, the problems, and the challenges of life are like a frayed thread. We mistakenly believe that conditions such as abusive parents, being black in a country that honors whiteness, or scoring low on an IQ test can determine the beauty of our cloth. We can still weave beautifully!

Of course, if as human beings we could choose the life we wanted, we would always pick the path of least resistance, the road around pain. But by avoiding pain we miss out on profound lessons, the glorious gifts of grace.

To change is a mighty task, demanding faith, courage, and perseverance. As much as we may want to change our entire life at once, we cannot. We must make it new one thread at a time. We must be patient and focused, because even though we can alter our exterior---where we live, where we work, who our friends are---we must still do the hard work of transforming our interior.

We make one change after another after another until our tapestry is complete and we have woven ourselves a sweet and magnificent life. Moments of Grace is about that process.

In my first book, Laughing in the Dark, I recounted my own journey from heroin and abusive relationships to health and success. On my book tour, I

was asked the same question over and over, in many different ways: "How did you turn your life around?" "How could you go from using heroin and choosing abusive men to become drug free, a responsible mother, and a reporter at the Washington Post?" "Why did you make it when others didn't?" "What is your secret?" "What saved you?"

I couldn't answer these questions because I didn't think I could. The truth is, we do not all change in the same way. We take different paths to arrive at different answers at different times. There is no one road map to perfection and there cannot ever be. However, we must all meet some of the same challenges to change. We must deal with the same issues, though they may manifest themselves differently in each life. What is offered here is wisdom on what you must possess within to change, and a look at those areas of life we must all examine in order to make our lives better. If a road map to change existed, it would look like an old treasure map with a maze of paths and signposts leading to the prize.

You could reach your destination in a variety of ways but not without first stopping at each signpost at least once---and sometimes, much to our regret, again and again---before reaching the prize.

Moments of Grace is about those stops along the way. Many of them represent Faith, Courage, Friends, Family, Work, and Self-Love. To reach the treasure, you must visit each, be challenged while you are there, ponder the meaning of the lessons you receive, and be tested again and again. The prize? Peace. Happiness. Joy.