

Beginner's Pluck

BUILD YOUR LIFE OF
PURPOSE AND IMPACT NOW

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Some names and details have been changed to protect the privacy of the individuals involved.

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For my incredibly loving and supportive parents,
who never clipped my wings.

For my boys,
who are my home and my greatest adventure.

For the Dreamer/Doers
(and especially those who flail
and stumble a bit along the way):
you are my inspiration.

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Introduction

Naked and Afraid

I was taking a shower—the public kind that you have to keep feeding quarters—in a national park in Northern California at about 6 AM. If you didn’t know that pay-by-the-minute showers existed, you’re welcome for this educational book about the gritty wonders of the world I’m writing for you. Stick with me, kid.

I was in my midtwenties and I’d been on the road with my brand-new husband living out of our Honda Element for about four months. We had a meeting with a potential buyer (Of what? We’ll get to that later; details, details.) in a few hours that I was trying to get spiffed up for. And by “spiffed up” I mean, I washed my hair for the first time in a week and cleaned the peanut butter crust out from under my fingernails.

I was thankful for an actual, real shower with running water (versus a slightly moistened towelette bath in a McDonald’s bathroom—my norm at the time), and I was going to town sudsing up my hair, singing Carole King’s “Natural

Woman,” when . . . the water turns off, really messing with my *American Idol* shower vibes. But not to worry! It just needs another quarter.

Only,

I’m fresh out of quarters this time.

Of course.

So here I am. Naked and afraid. OK. Not so much “afraid” as angry. It’s cold and I’m covered in soap and I have no water and I need to be at this meeting in San Francisco in two hours and it’s at least an hour and a half away.

I have no plan.

So, I cuss a bunch and then I start to cry. (Alternate title of this book.) Not so much about the meeting or even because of the soap in my eyes, but because all of a sudden I go from singing Carole King and being grateful for an actual real shower to looking at this frozen-in-time snapshot of my life trajectory.

Yes, I was stranded in the shower with soap in my eyes. But it wasn’t just that. I also had no income, no insurance, and no home address. I had spent the entire day before The Shower Incident as a vendor at a hipster street market where I made a whopping \$11, which was barely enough to cover the cost of the jar of peanut butter I consumed throughout the grueling 12-hour day of near-constant rejection, let alone the cost of my market booth and the gas it took to get there. Being stranded in the shower was really just icing on the pathetic cake. This is not what I pictured when my parents and teachers and coaches told me I “could be whatever [I] wanted to be.”

Perhaps you’ve also had a sense that you are not where you’d hoped you’d be by now: the dream job, the forever partner, the financial security, the supportive community, a sense of purpose and meaning in your days. Perhaps you have a

sneaking suspicion that you were made for more and you're not quite sure when you managed to wander off the straight and narrow path toward The Promised Land of Your Purpose and Passion.

Here's the brutal truth no one wants to tell you: "Following Your Dreams" and "Finding Your Passion" and "Dreaming Big" sometimes land you broke, naked, and crying by yourself in a bathroom made of cinderblocks in the middle of the woods.

THE END.

Just kidding, friends! That's not the end. (And in fact, it's not really the beginning, either. We'll make our way back there at some point.)

But right now, I want to tell you that if you are reading this while metaphorically naked and stranded, you're not alone. It might actually be a sign that you're on to something really good. (But if you are *literally* naked and stranded, I bless your decision to burn this book to fuel your rescue smoke-signal efforts.)

In fact, that feeling of being lost, empty-handed, and clueless that you've been taught to panic over or fake your way through might actually be a hint that you're in *a really good place*.

What if feeling lost or stuck because of your lack of experience, confidence, connections, and know-how was not a hindrance but instead a secret weapon in your journey to building a life of purpose and impact?

What if, without even knowing it, you've got a special power that you just need to acknowledge and then learn how to wield to your advantage?

That magic power, my friends?

Beginner's Pluck.

According to some official-enough looking website on the internet, **Beginner's LUCK** is defined as “*the phenomenon of novices experiencing disproportionate frequency of success or succeeding against an expert in a given activity. One would expect experts to outperform novices—when the opposite happens it is counter-intuitive, hence the need for a term to describe this phenomenon.*”¹

Phenomenon. That's the word we're using to describe when a Beginner actually succeeds. Ouch. Kinda harsh. Yet, when I look at my own story and the hundreds of stories I've heard over the last ten years while meeting people doing meaningful work and creating a positive impact, the Beginner's success story doesn't actually seem to be all that rare. Certainly not a phenomenon.

In fact, the story of the empty-handed, know-nothing, pie-in-the-sky Beginner actually creating an extraordinary life of passion and purpose is common enough to make me wonder: Do Beginners succeed despite their lack of experience? Or perhaps, in part, because of it? Could being a Beginner (or at least, acting like one by channeling your Inner Beginner during every season of life) actually be an asset in your journey to build a life of purpose and passion?

Yes!

After all, who needs luck when you've got PLUCK?*

What many beginners lack in experience, track record, know-how,

*If you're not a 90-year-old woman named Dottie who learned to speak English in 1908, you may not know that *pluck* is one of the best words in the English language.

and connections, they make up in nerve, curiosity, spirit, courage, and a willingness to acknowledge they don't have it all figured out. Which are all, as it turns out, incredibly useful in building lives of purpose, passion, and impact.

If you're feeling lost, overwhelmed, and clueless, it can feel like a pretty demoralizing place to be.

But.

It's actually a miraculous place to be.

You, my friend, should you choose to accept this ~~mission~~ mentality, are in the Magical Land of Beginners. It's the alternate universe where falling doesn't hurt as much because you don't have that far to tumble.

It's a world where all the energy you would have spent posturing and being afraid and desperately trying to save face and keep up with the Joneses can be poured into building a meaningful life that aligns with your truest beliefs and deepest desires.

If you learn a few key principles of truly owning your Beginner's Pluck and are *intentional* about cultivating those mindsets along the journey, your chances of success in building this kind of life might actually be better than the fancy, experienced, well-connected Know-It-Alls.

In the years between being stranded in the shower in the woods questioning all my life choices and my present-day reality of living into my purpose, I've learned a thing or two about not finding but *building* a life of purpose, passion, and impact.

Yes, when used as a verb, it is what you do to that unsightly and embarrassing chin hair your partner still doesn't know about because you pluck (v.) in privacy, but the real magic is in the noun usage. Pluck (n.) means: spirited and determined courage. Synonyms: courage, bravery, nerve, backbone, spine, daring, spirit, intrepidity, fearlessness, mettle, grit, determination, fortitude, resolve, stout-heartedness, dauntlessness, valor, heroism, audacity.



Hi. My name is Liz. I'm a wife and a mom and a journalist-gone-entrepreneur. I am the co-founder and CEO of a global socially-conscious fashion brand called Sseko (Say-Ko)* Designs that is creating community and opportunity for thousands of women in Uganda, the U.S., and across the globe. In addition to running a global company with employees and partners that span five continents, I've majorly pitted out on the dance floor while cutting a rug with *the* Ben and Jerry. During the first ever U.S.–Africa Leader's Summit, I listened, with tears rushing down my face, as First Ladies Laura Bush and Michelle Obama recognized Agnes, our brilliant managing director in Uganda, as a picture of "The Modern African Woman."

I've stood on stage at the Rockefeller Center, nine months pregnant, smiling through contractions while I received a surprise, giant cardboard check that I then carried with me as I waddled down 5th Ave and tried to hail a cab. I've gotten a little sassy on national television in front of 7 million people and stood in an airport magazine shop flipping through *Vogue* magazine to see our stunning products featured on a glossy spread.

I've started out the day negotiating a trade deal in a smoky back room filled with men who didn't believe that as a woman I should have a place at the (literal) table and somehow ended up closing the deal at the United Arab Emirates' equivalent of Disney World at 1 AM, eating caramel corn and riding roller coasters with those same guys.

*The brand name Sseko is derived from the Luganda word "Enseko," which means laughter.

Over the last ten years, we've built one of the largest manufacturing companies in Uganda, where we've entertained the president on multiple occasions, proving to him in person the magic (and gross domestic product!) women can create when actually taken seriously and given the opportunity to thrive in industries traditionally dominated by men.

And yet, I can promise you that none of these epic and rewarding highlights compare to the simple, everyday, even mundane moments that are fueled with belief that the work I am doing matters. That—with plenty of failures and missteps along the way—I am actively co-creating the world I want to live in.

As part of my work, I've had the privilege of traveling the globe from rural Kentucky to Estonia,* speaking to and hearing from tens of thousands of people about their desires to live lives of purpose and impact. I've interviewed hundreds of people looking for meaningful vocational opportunity, and through these experiences, I've been learning firsthand how the ubiquitous “Follow Your Dreams” and “Find Your Passion” motivational narrative is *really* affecting people.

And I've got to tell you: I think we've got some things very wrong. What I think was meant to be a message of encouragement and empowerment is actually creating anxiety, fear, and serious analysis paralysis.

My goal with this book is to teach you the principles that will help you debunk these myths, not so that you can live a

*I for sure had to look Estonia up on the map when I got invited to speak there, so if you're feeling bad about your European geography skills, join the club. Subsequently, a few weeks later I was invited to come speak in Georgia and automatically assumed I was blowing up in the European market. No offense to my fellow Americans, but I was sorely disappointed (and embarrassed) when, after inquiring about whether I'd need a visa to get into Georgia, I realized they were referring to the state, not the country.

life of complacency but so that you can stop wasting your time hunting for a unicorn that doesn't exist and instead get down to the incredibly juicy, adventurous, life-giving work of *building* an extraordinary life of passion, purpose, and impact.

Over the last ten years, I've taken notes and boiled down hundreds of conversations and stories and interviews to 14 key principles that guide my life and allow me to access the counterintuitive magic of Beginner's Pluck. Building a life of purpose and impact is not nearly as angsty and unachievable and overwhelming as you think it is. It's not rocket science. (But there is science!) In fact, it's probably simpler than you can imagine. It's Beginner's work, after all.

The principles of Beginner's Pluck:

1. Own Your Average
2. Stop Trying to "Find Your Passion"
3. Dream Small
4. Choose Curiosity over Criticism
5. Be on Assignment in Your Own Life
6. Find and Replace
7. Surprise Yourself
8. Get Your Steps In
9. Get Hooked on Making (and Keeping!) Promises
10. Be Good with Good Enough
11. Stop, Drop, and WOW
12. Dream to Attract Your Team
13. Don't Hide from The Shadows
14. Walk One Another Home

Listen, I believe in the very core of my being that you were made to be here, right now, right where you are. There is something extraordinarily wonderful and mindbogglingly awesome about you. Not about what you've done, or are doing, or will do, but just about who you are and who you were created to be. Like a strand of DNA, you are a unique sequence of The Divine, and therefore you will leave an imprint on the world in a way that no one else on Planet Earth can. And every day that you spend being paralyzed by fear is one less day that we get to experience the gifts you have to give.

Our vocations are an incredibly important part of building a life of purpose and impact because, as Annie Dillard says, "Where we spend our days is, of course, how we spend our lives."² I will explore the principles of Beginner's Pluck by using my story and specifically my experience building a social enterprise from the ground up over the last ten years. But let me be very clear: you needn't be an entrepreneur to benefit from the principles of Beginner's Pluck.

These 14 principles apply to all vocations; and our vocations are not just where and how we get paid, but every area of life where we are pursuing our purpose and creating an impact. In order to access your Beginner's Pluck, these principles can and should be applied not only in your jobs but in your creative endeavors, family, community, and inner lives.

You can use the principles of Beginner's Pluck to build a life of purpose and impact while raising nonprofit funds *and* while raising teenagers.

You can do it while closing deals *and* while closing the educational gap.

You can do it while building companies *and* while building LEGO towers.

You can do it while running for office *and* while running your first 5K.

You can do it while nursing patients in a hospital *and* while nursing a wee babe, bleary-eyed at 3 AM.

You can do it while speaking from a stage to thousands of people *and* while you bravely speak your truth out loud in the mirror to yourself.

BUT . . .

You cannot do it if you're living in fear.

You cannot do it if you're running someone else's race.

You cannot do it accidentally.

If you want to build a life of purpose, it's going to have to be *on purpose*.

* * *

For all of you who are done playing small, done being ruled by your insecurities, done wasting precious time and energy wondering where you belong and comparing and scrolling and tapping and wishing . . .

For the Misfit, the Space Cadet, the Wild One, the Misunderstood . . .

For the Scaredy Cat, the Never Enough, the Can't Keep Up . . .

For the Too Much, Too Messy, Too Big, Too Tender . . .

For the one who is ready to put a sleeper hold on all of the above and get down to the BIG BUSINESS of creating, unleashing, and saying YES to adventure . . .

IT'S TIME TO OWN YOUR INNER BEGINNER.

I'll be here to cheer you on.

You're not alone.

You can sit with us. Right next to me.

[Gently but enthusiastically pats seat on the lunch table bench that's borderline uncomfortably close.*]

Now, are you ready to get to work and have some fun?

*Don't worry, although we left off in my journey with me naked, sudsy, and stranded in the woods, by this point in the story I am now fully clothed.

ONE

Own Your Average

When I was in elementary school, I tried out for the community theatre production of *Cinderella* and auditioned for the role of—you guessed it—Cinderella. I mean, go big or go home, right?

And I landed it! And the show eventually made its way from rural Illinois to New York where I was the youngest lead to ever grace a Broadway stage.

Oh, Liz Forkin Bohannon! The musical theatre child prodigy! I think I saw a special on Bravo about her once, you perhaps thought to yourself while browsing the shelves of your local bookstore.

Just kidding. You'd likely never heard my name before because here is how that audition *actually* went down: I went up against seasoned high-school-aged thespians for the role of Cinderella. My mother, a very intelligent woman who surely recognized the unlikelihood of a "successful" outcome, did not try to persuade me otherwise. In fact, she practiced my song with me, drove me to the audition, and whispered a hopeful

and sincere “Break a leg, Lizzy Pea!” as I walked through the curtains into the spotlight on an empty stage in front of four scary-looking judges. I gave it my best go and afterward my mom took me to McDonald’s for a celebratory ice cream cone.

In the few days between the audition and receiving a call from the casting director, I threw my eight-year-old self into a Cinderella character study. I dreamed about the costume changes and the lights and determined where I could surreptitiously pinch myself to illicit enough pain to squeeze out some fake, award-winning tears. A few days into my preparation for my dream role, we got a phone call from the director. I indeed had made the cast!

My role was . . .

Bird.

I did not, in fact, have a single line in the entire play. Just a few scenes where I’d hop around on stage with a handful of other mediocre wannabe woodland animals.

A BIRD.

A bird who didn’t even have a NAME.

I was *devastated*.

When my mom relayed the news, I burst into tears and ran into her bedroom closet, shutting myself in and sobbing in the dark. I was, of course, sad about my dashed dreams, but I also remember the feeling of being utterly *humiliated*.

I replayed in my head all the practice that went into that audition. All the unabashed dreaming out loud about what it would be like to be Cinderella. I couldn’t believe I was so *stupid* to want something that bad and to actually believe I had a chance.

After a few minutes of sobbing by myself, my mom opened the closet door and sat down with me while I cried. She scratched

my back and told me that she was proud of me for trying. And then, through my tears, I verbalized what was surely assumed by all parties: I would not be participating in that stupid play, *obviously*.

And then my sweet, supportive, back-scratching mama sat up straight and made it *very clear* that actually that was *not* how this was going to go down.* I had auditioned, and I had received a role. And I was *not allowed* to quit because it wasn't the starring role I had imagined. She told me that practices started on Monday and that I would *absolutely be* attending. Case closed.

And then she told me that sure, it stung to be a bird when you wanted to be Cinderella, but that I would be the best non-speaking bird that stage had ever seen.

She echoed the famous show-biz words of Constantin Stanislavski. "There are no small parts," she said. "Only small actors."¹

She promised me that she'd help make me an epic bird costume, and sitting there in that dark closet, we brainstormed a character name because while I couldn't change my role, I could at least have some fancy feathers and the dignity of having a character name that wasn't just a species classification.

We went back and forth for a while and finally decided on "Biddy Bird." It was no matter that this "character name" would never reach beyond the two of us or even make it into the official program.

When the time came for opening night, I Biddy Bird-ed my heart out. I sang loudly, hopped endlessly, and even managed

*My mom is #MomGoals. Reminder to all parents, myself included, to let your kids dream big and don't bail them out when they fail.

to depart from the official choreography for a second and shake my fancy tail feathers like the rebel, avant-garde, avian-inspired thespian that I was.

I would love to tell you that this role prepared me for my next slightly better role and so on and so forth until I managed to build a successful theatre career. But in fact, the very next play I tried out for was *Babes in Toyland* where I landed the role of . . .

AND I KID YOU NOT

A moth.

I mean, if there is anything more demoralizing than a nameless bird, it's most certainly "moth." The path to being demoted from a non-speaking bird is a narrow one, but I managed to find and walk it.

I mean, A MOTH?!

But I digress.

The point of that experience was not, in fact, to prepare me for a slightly better role and launch me into the eventual Broadway success I dreamed about. Rather, it taught me that we are neither called to vie for the spotlight nor to shrink into the chorus line. We are simply called to figure out what we have to offer,

the gift *we* have to give,
the words *we* have to speak,
the art *we* have to make,
the song *we* have to sing,

and then go *all in* and belt it out like a buck-toothed eight-year-old trying to win a Tony award for a non-speaking role in a community theatre production.



We each have a sacred part to play. What the world *doesn't* need are more people who are desperately trying to convince themselves and others they are *above average* special Cinderellas because they think that is what will earn them the spotlight and that the spotlight itself will give them a sense of worthiness and purpose.

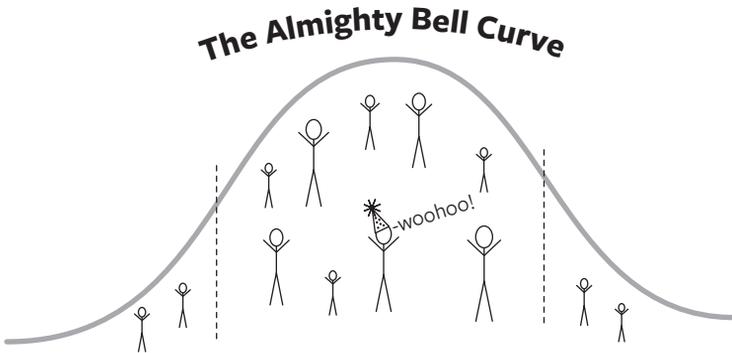
The world *also* doesn't need more people who shrink into the chorus line because they erroneously believe they are inherently *below average* and are terrified of what others might think of them should they spread their wings and try to fly.

Because the truth is, you're, like me, most likely . . .

Pretty average.

I know, I know. I have a real gift for inspiring words. Please someone make a beautiful hand-lettered Insta-Quote out of that:

You. Are. Average.



But it's true. The majority of people reading (and writing) this book are most likely somewhere in the middle of the Almighty Bell Curve when it comes to inherent talent, capacity, giftedness, and intelligence.

If that makes you feel bad, it's because we've been conditioned to think that being inherently average is depressing and demoralizing. When in fact, *Owning Your Average* is actually a *remarkably freeing and powerful* acknowledgment because being born inherently gifted or above average isn't a prerequisite to living an extraordinary life.

Let me be very clear: *Owning Your Average* is *not* a call for complacency. Don't you dare Own Your Average so that you can stay there or so that you can be content with an average life devoid of passion, purpose, connection, or deep meaning. Own Your Average so that you can *free yourself up* from the junk sucking up all the energy you spend trying to figure out how you measure up and instead channel that energy into becoming an interested, curious, Dreamer/Doer who believes that truly extraordinary stories and lives can be built by the Average Us.

Your inherent gifts and talents and smarts most likely do not make you above average. And neither do your fears and deepest insecurities and shortcomings. I hate to break it to you, but those are also, well, *quite average*. You do know that almost every. last. one of us deals with imposter syndrome, don't you? Am I good enough? Do I have what it takes? Will I be found out? What if I fail? What will other people think of me? Am I in over my head? I've literally never met a non-sociopathic human who doesn't struggle with self-doubt.

If you think your fears and limiting mindsets make you special, you're going to have to try harder than that, old sport!

Something miraculous will happen when you Own Your Average. You will stop only saying yes to the things you think you'll immediately excel in. When you Own Your Average, you start to realize that no one is thinking about you quite as much as you think they are. You are not Beyoncé. (Or maybe you are, in which case, OMG. HI, BEY!) When you decide to Own Your Average, you will start to believe that success will require lots and lots of work and isn't just an inevitable result of being born awesome. You also realize that your insecurities and failures aren't the telltale sign that you're below average. You know that mistakes and wrong turns are simply a requisite on the road to building an above-average life of purpose and passion, which means you'll be less afraid to fail and flail a bit.

And more importantly, you'll become less afraid and more likely to succeed, perhaps *wildly*, because you truly believe you're just as worthy and likely to build an extraordinary life of purpose and passion as anyone else.

* * *

I know it's only chapter one and it's a lot to ask that you trust me when I'm asking you to go against every self-helpy inspirational thing you've ever heard about how *special* you are and instead shout your Average from the rooftops. So, if you don't trust me quite enough yet, allow me to introduce The Scientists who will back me up.

There was a brilliant study done by a psychologist named Claudia M. Mueller that fundamentally changed the stories I tell myself, the way I run my company, and the way I raise my children. Way to go, CLAUDIA!

Claudia and her scientist pals gave a test to several hundred fifth graders.² After the first set of problems, on which most children did pretty well, they praised the children.

In Group One, they praised the kids for being really smart. “Wow! That’s a great score! You must be *really smart and gifted*. You’re *so special*.”

In Group Two, they praised progress, growth, and work ethic. “Wow! That’s a great score! You must have *worked really hard* at solving those problems and stuck with it when someone else would have gotten frustrated and given up. I bet you’ll do even better next time!”

The result? Those in Group One who were praised for their *inherent* talent and intelligence shied away from choosing a more challenging assignment in the future. Once the belief that they were special got planted, the risk of accepting a challenging assignment where they may struggle and fail became too great.

On the other hand, the students in Group Two who were praised for their progress, hard work, curiosity, grit, determination, and mindset wanted a *more* challenging assignment in the future. They were eager for the next challenge where they could continue to work hard and learn from the process. Failure wasn’t nearly as scary to these kids.

Not only did the kids in Group One want easier assignments, their performance on the next test *declined*, while the kids from Group Two performed *markedly better*.

What I desperately want you to understand is that being extraordinary or talented or gifted isn’t a prerequisite to living an extraordinary life and being a part of a story that is so much bigger than you. Building a life of purpose and passion has so much less to do with your inherent intelligence

or gifts and more about your posture, mindset, and curiosity quotient. And not a single one of these things is limited to The Above Average among us. So, go against all the instinctive motivational mumbo jumbo you've ever heard and proudly . . .

Own Your Average!

* * *

All this talk about Owning Your Average might have your insecurities flaring up a bit. I'm going to ask you to trust me again as we embark on a little experiment: every time you say or think you're struggling with an "insecurity" I want you to replace the word "insecurity" with "Immature Ego."

What? Ego? Me?! *The nerve of this lady . . .*

If talking about your Ego makes you feel defensive, allow me to redirect your aghast over to Franciscan friar and spiritual teacher Richard Rohr. Blame him!

Rohr says our Immature Egos are "a social and mental construct to get you started on your life journey. It is largely defined in distinction from others, precisely as your separate and unique self. It is probably necessary to get started, but it becomes problematic when you stop there and spend the rest of your life promoting and protecting it."

Our Immature Egos are also, problematically, "inadequate to the big questions of love, death, suffering, God or infinity." He goes on to say, "When you are connected to The Whole, you no longer need to protect or defend The Part. You are now connected to something inexhaustible."³

Connected to The Whole. Gives me goosebumps every time.

When you're connected to The Whole, you will realize that the story you are partaking in and coauthoring is SO VERY

BIG that you can no longer believe in a story *so small* that it has you in the very center. You will become more enamored with the Bigness of the Beautiful Story and what we can accomplish *together* than with your own individual performance in it.

On this journey to building a life of purpose and impact, I can all but promise that you will say and do the wrong thing. You will flail and you will fumble. And at times it will be such a train wreck, you will think you'll never recover from it. You'll probably beat yourself up and say terrible things to yourself that you wouldn't dare say to another human. But time and time again, you will wake up the next day to a sun that did not fall out of the sky in response to your mistake. This will happen over and over until you finally start to let go of your Immature Ego that whispers the lie that you're powerful enough to screw it all up for good.

Richard Rohr goes on to tell us that our Immature Egos are "more bogus than bad."⁴

I love this so much. What this tells me is that I can stop beating myself up about my Immature Ego and instead simply get on with the work of helping my Ego grow up a little bit so I can be a part of a bigger, juicier story. As you attempt to mature your Ego, please be kind and gentle with yourself the way you *gently* and *kindly* and *patiently* help a child grow and learn instead of attempting to fault and shame them into maturity. The process of maturing our Egos is lifelong work, so you don't need to be a jerk about it. Your Immature Ego *used* to suit you and serve a purpose. It's not evil or bad, it's just that as you grow into becoming part of The Whole, the Old Costume you constructed no longer fits.

When we stop being obsessed with the Almighty Bell Curve, always asking "How do I measure up?" we can instead put

our energy into becoming who we were created to be and encouraging others toward the belief that *they* are also an irreplaceable part of The Whole. When you Own Your Average, you'll start to understand that *every* human on Planet Earth is a unique combination and sequence of The Divine and carries an equally valuable, one of a kind, never-going-to-see-it-again brand of magic.

We are each unique.

But we are not unique for being unique. (Mind bender, I know.)

When you start believing this about yourself, you will start to channel all the energy you recover from worrying about how you compare into a beautiful vision of collective ambition—dreams that will raise the tide, not just for yourself but for others too.

When you Own Your Average and do the intentional work of helping your Ego mature, you will take on greater challenges and say yes before you're ready because you're less terrified of failing and more interested in growth and *movement forward*. You get to channel every ounce of that *recovered* energy you used to spend protecting yourself and worrying about what other people will think into solving interesting problems and building an extraordinary life of purpose and impact for yourself and others. When you Own Your Average, you can take risks and finally take flight.

And you, Bidy Bird, in all your Average glory, were meant *to fly*.