

Good. Better. Best.

A Journey from where you are to where your meant to be.

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Published: Nexus Group LLC

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Letter to the Reader

If you're holding this book, there's a good chance you've had moments where you wondered: Am I doing enough? Am I enough? I've asked myself those same questions, more times than I can count.

I'm Jason, and this book is as much a testimony as it is a tool. I wrote it for every person who's ever looked around and felt behind, every soul who's ever doubted whether they had what it takes to rise, and every heart that needs a reminder: everything you need to begin is already within you.

I was raised in Wetipquin, Maryland, a small, close-knit town nestled between corn fields, gravel roads, and riverbanks. I had the privilege of growing up in the home of my great-grandparents, Pricilla "Tooty" Mitchell and Amos "Mitch" Mitchell. Their home was a sanctuary of wisdom, hard-earned lessons, and unwavering love that laid the foundation for who I'd become.

That doesn't mean my mother wasn't present, she absolutely was. But she had the strength of our family's matriarch and patriarch to help carry the weight. As for my father, he was a long-haul truck driver. I cherished the road trips we took together, crisscrossing states and building memories. Once a month, my aunts Darcy and Annette pick up my brother and me. They'd spoil us a bit, take us to visit extended family, and then we'd spend time with our dad.

These early experiences became the building blocks of my identity, each one adding to the quiet architecture of my inner life. But as life continued, other moments would arise. Moments that would test me, define me, and sometimes cause me to question everything I thought I knew.

In this book, I share my journey from self-doubt to self-definition, not because I've figured it all out, but because I've learned how to begin from where I am. And that's what I hope to pass on to you.

The mantra that guides these pages, “Good, better, best. Never let it rest, until your good is better and your better best”, was passed down to me. Now, I pass it to you.

This isn’t a step-by-step guide. It’s a rhythm. A return. A reminder.

So, wherever you are, start there.

Chapter 1: Begin Anyway- The Power of Good

Let's start with honesty: I've often felt like my efforts weren't enough. Raised in a small Maryland town by my great-grandparents, I was surrounded by love and lessons that grounded me. But later in life, scarcity began to reshape how I saw myself. When my Pop-Pop passed away, and my Granny moved to New York to live with my great-uncle, everything shifted. My mom had to raise us on her own, and it felt like we were constantly trying to catch up.

The home I'd known, the safety, the rhythm, the roots, was gone. Just like that, we were thrust into survival mode. Life got harder. The challenges came one after another. But through it all, I held tightly to the lessons my great-grandparents had instilled in me. Their wisdom became my compass, even when everything else felt uncertain.

One lesson sticks out to me as I think about the beginning. I asked Pop-Pop for a bike, and instead of giving me one, he handed me three broken bikes and a toolbox. Although I wanted a new one like my friend down the street had, my Pop decided to give me more than just a bike. So, I knuckled down and built one from scratch. It wasn't perfect, but it worked. That experience taught me that starting with what you have is enough, that good can be a foundation of something better.

That bike wasn't just transportation, it was transformation. I didn't understand at the time that I was learning more than mechanical skills. I was learning patience, resourcefulness, and the quiet confidence that comes from building something with your own two hands. That same confidence would carry me later in life, through leadership roles, parenting, and every season where I wasn't handed the answer, but was expected to build my own solution.

Boy did my Grammy love poems and sayings; she specifically would repeat ones that she likes.

“Do the best you can until you know better. Then when you know better, do better.” Maya Angelou

Here’s the thing: Good isn’t a placeholder for ‘not enough’ it’s the foundation where greatness begins. It’s the soil where every other step grows from. Good is the moment you stop pretending and start showing up. It’s that quiet decision to keep going, even when no one claps. It’s the voice that whispers, “Start with what you have.”

As I was growing up there was a saying that we began to say quite a bit **“It’s All Good”** and until I got older the saying was nothing other than a way to express that I’m okay, everything is alright. Then it hit me one day as I was reflecting and if Good is the foundation of all things to come it is truly all good. Every circumstance that’s used to shape you good, bad or indifferent all used to help you to become who you were meant to be.

I used to think I had to wait for a better version of myself to appear before I could begin. A more confident version. A more educated, wealthier, healthier version. But what I’ve learned, and what I want to teach, is that

You don’t wait to be ready. You begin to become.

7-Day Reflection Challenge: What’s Good Right Now?

This weeklong reflection is designed to help you discover and affirm “GOOD” your current strengths, even if they feel small or fragile. Each day, focus on one prompt below. Use a journal, your phone’s notes, or even voice memos. The point is to engage honestly and gently.

Day 1: Awareness

What's one thing you're proud of today, even if it feels small?

Day 2: Progress

What part of your life feels like a work in progress, and what's one thing you've done to move it forward?

Day 3: Presence

Where have you shown up this week without giving yourself credit?

Day 4: Gratitude

What's one thing, person, or resource you're grateful to have right now?

Day 5: Courage

Recall a recent moment you made a brave or difficult choice. What gave you strength?

Day 6: Permission

What would it look like to accept your current season without judgment?

Day 7: Intention

What's one thing you want to carry into next week with purpose?

At the end of the week, reread your answers. Notice the growth, honesty, the patterns. This is your good. This is your foundation.

Workbook Page: "My Starting Point"

Use the space below to reflect on what you've learned from the 7-Day Challenge.

- What surprised you most about your answers?
- Which day's question felt the hardest to answer—and why?
- What themes are emerging in your current season?
- What's one affirmation you want to carry forward?

Example Affirmation: "I am not behind, I am building."

My Own Affirmation: _____

This chapter isn't about fixing yourself. It's about honoring where you are.

Your good might feel quiet, bruised, or unsure, but it's enough.

Chapter 2: The Better Shift -Let go of Perfect, Step into Purpose

There's a moment in your journey where survival gives way to strategy. When you stop reacting and start choosing. For me, it was when I realized that managing my life wasn't the same as directing it.

Growing up, we were doing our best with what we had. My mom was always working, doing everything she could to keep food on the table. I had to grow up fast. I learned to be responsible, but I also learned to hustle for worth. That made me disciplined, yes, but also deeply tired.

One of the clearest memories I have of this shift happened during my early 20s. I was offered a position to lead a project I didn't feel ready for. I almost turned it down. My inner voice said, "You haven't done this before. You'll mess it up." But something in me said, "If you keep waiting to be qualified, you'll never start leading." I took the job. I stumbled through the first few weeks. I made mistakes. But I asked questions. I listened. I stayed honest. And slowly, I realized: I was capable, even in progress. I was reminded of an earlier lesson, as long as you have the tools and resources you can build anything.

That experience taught me that fear doesn't disappear, but you don't have to hand it the mic.

Better starts when we shift from being driven by fear to being pulled by purpose. I remember walking into that leadership role, terrified that I was going to mess it up, that someone would find out I was just figuring it out as I went. I dressed sharp, spoke confidently, but inside, I was afraid of being seen as unqualified. That fear drove me to overperform, to micromanage, to exhaust myself. It wasn't until I got clear on what truly mattered, serving people with integrity, not impressing them, that I felt something shift. The fear didn't disappear, but it stopped steering the wheel.

"You have to go the way your blood beats. If you don't live the only life you have, you won't live any life at all." — James Baldwin

So here's a question for you: What area of your life is asking for alignment instead of applause?

Journal Reflection:

- Where are you managing instead of leading?
- Where are you showing up from fear instead of purpose?
- What would "better" look like if you stopped performing and started trusting yourself?

The best decisions I've made came from listening inward, not reacting outward.

This chapter helps you make that shift.

Chapter 3: Authentically Best - No More Performing Only Aligning

Best isn't about being impressive.

It's about being aligned.

There was a point when I looked successful on the outside, but I didn't feel whole. I was chasing applause, not peace. I had built better habits, but not a better life. I was still defining myself through performance.

Living aligned meant I had to start asking **better** questions: What do I really value? What kind of person am I becoming when no one is watching? Where am I betraying myself to gain approval from others?

For me, internal alignment looked like getting up before the sun and spending ten minutes journaling, not to look productive, but to hear myself clearly. It meant choosing what mattered over what impressed. I started saying no to certain speaking gigs and leadership roles, not because I didn't want to help, but because I was no longer willing to abandon my peace for a platform.

I remember one week in particular; I had three major opportunities land in my lap. All of them came with praise, clout, and good money. But only one thing aligned with the deeper work I felt called to do. Saying no to the others felt like losing, but deep down, it was the first time I felt like I was winning with myself, taking care of myself, giving myself grace.

Alignment also meant cleaning up my language, internally and externally. I stopped saying, "I have to," and started saying, "I choose to." That single shift began rewiring how I moved through life. I wasn't performing anymore. I was practicing integrity, integrity for myself.

"Not everything that is faced can be changed, but nothing can be changed until it is faced." — James Baldwin

Becoming your best doesn't happen all at once. It's a daily invitation to live from your center, not your insecurity. It's turning down the noise and tuning in to the truth of who you are.

You don't arrive at best. You live into it, one aligned choice at a time, just like I did with that bike in Chapter 1. One bolt tightened. One tube patched. One decision at a time.

Best isn't a destination. It's build, and every act of alignment is another turn of the wrench.

Journal Reflection:

- What's one area of your life that feels misaligned?
- Where are you still seeking approval at the expense of peace?
- What's one small decision you can make today to honor your values?

Your best self isn't someone far off in the future. Your best is waiting inside today's honest, intentional choices.

Let's keep building from there.

Chapter 4: The Work Between the Wins -When Growth Gets

Messy

Growth isn't always exciting. Most of it happens in quiet, uncelebrated moments. It's the part between breakthroughs where discipline matters most. You won't always feel progress, but showing up consistently builds the future you're heading toward.

“It is in the quiet crucible of your personal, private sufferings that your noblest dreams are born.” — Wintley Phipps

I remember a season when I had stepped back from a leadership role to focus on personal healing. At first, it felt free. I thought, “Finally, space to breathe.” But then the silence settled in. The phone didn't ring as much. The compliments faded. The fast pace that had once validated me disappeared. And with that quiet came doubt. I asked myself, “Am I doing enough?” “Did I lose momentum?”

It was humbling to realize how much of my identity had been tied to external activity. I had to learn how to be still without losing purpose. I had to embrace the plateau not as a punishment, but as perspective and preparation.

During that season, I began walking daily. Just me, the road, and my thoughts. No music. No distractions. I started journaling again, but this time not for insight, just for presence.

That's when I learned: the most important growth often happens when nothing looks like it's changing.

This is where your habits carry you. Where your private victories become your public strength.

Consistency isn't about hype. It's about faithfulness to yourself and the process. It's about showing up even when no one claps. Even when the old voices creep in and try to drag you back.

Journal Reflection:

- What Quiet Discipline Can You Commit To?
- Pick one daily habit to stick with for a week. Track it. Reflect. Ask yourself: What's growing in the silence?

Growth happens here.

No one tells you how boring growth can be.

Not the start. Not the breakthrough.

But the middle, the long, quiet middle, is where most people give up.

Let's keep showing up.

Chapter 5: From Me to Meaning - Living for Something Greater

You are no longer just growing for you.

This is the turning point. Your growth becomes service. Your healing becomes instruction. Your presence becomes legacy.

Pop-Pop and Grammy didn't leave behind wealth, they left behind wisdom. Their actions taught me that meaning comes not from how much you accumulate, but how much you give, how deeply you love, and how consistently you show up for others.

There was a moment when I realized I wasn't being asked to be more, I was being asked to pour more. Not from emptiness, but from the overflow of healing, reflection, and growth.

Meaning, I've learned, isn't something you find. It's something you build, one act of service, one shared story, one moment of *connection at a time*.

“Service is the rent we pay for being. It is the very purpose of life.”
— ***Shirley Chisholm***

Living for something greater looks like:

- Choosing mentorship over isolation
- Choosing impact over applause
- Choosing contribution over convenience

Journal Reflection:

- What's a piece of wisdom you've gained through struggle?
- Who could benefit from hearing that today?
- Where can your pain become someone else's permission?

You are not just becoming, you are becoming someone who multiplies hope. Now it's your turn to live a life that breathes life into others.

Chapter 6: When the Voice Comes Back - Facing Fear Without Folding

You thought the voice was gone.

But fear has a funny way of revisiting us right when we're about to rise.

Just when things start to feel possible, fear whispers, "What if you fail?"

I remember standing on the edge of an opportunity I'd prayed for. I was speaking in front of a room of professionals I deeply respected. Everything in me felt small. My hands shook. My breath caught. That old voice said, "They're going to see through you." All those insecurities started to rise up again, your black, fat, not as educated as everyone else.

But I remembered something: courage doesn't always roar. Sometimes it just says, "Do it anyway." Why, because everyone has value and you never know what is needed from those who are listening and looking.

So I did.

But fear didn't leave right away. It showed up again when I was making a hard decision for my family, when I was investing in a project without guarantees, and even in quiet moments, wondering if I was leading my children well.

I realized fear is a visitor, not a verdict. And each time it came back, I had to remind myself: the goal is not to eliminate fear. It's to identify it, respect it learn from it and to keep moving forward despite it.

"I will not have my life narrowed down. I will not bow down to someone else's whim or to someone else's ignorance." — Bell Hooks

So, what do we do when that voice comes back?

We tell the truth. We name the fear. And then we decide to walk anyway.

Because growth doesn't mean the fear is gone, it means the fear no longer gets to lead.

Journal Reflection:

- Write down one fear that keeps returning.
- Ask: Where did this come from?
- Then ask: What evidence do I have that this is no longer true?
- Write a sentence that starts with: "Even though I feel afraid, I will still..."

Courage Practice:

Over the next week, commit to one small action each day that you've been avoiding due to fear. Each night, reflect on how you felt before and after.

- What did I avoid today, and why?
- What did I face today, and how did it feel afterward?
- What am I learning about my strength?

Name it. Write it. Walk through it.

Here's the truth: Fear thrives in silence. But when you name it, talk about it, and walk with it, you take its power away.

Fear is not your truth.
It's just the echo of who you used to be.

Let's keep walking.

Here's the truth: Fear thrives in silence. But when you name it, talk about it, and walk with it—you take its power away.

Chapter 7: The Whole Story - Becoming Fully You

True growth isn't about perfection, it's about integration. Your past, present, and future belong at the same table. Even the messy chapters.

“We delight in the beauty of the butterfly but rarely admit the changes it has gone through to achieve that beauty.” — Maya Angelou

Becoming fully you means embracing your whole story, the success and the struggle. The wins and the wounds.

I went through a real reckoning early in my adult life. I was part of a leadership team made up of people I admired deeply, mentors, role models, folks I had grown alongside for years. I invested not just my time, but my trust. And then, one day, everything unraveled. A devastating truth came to light: some of the very people who had helped shape me had caused profound harm to others. I won't go into the details here, but I will say this, they didn't practice what they preached, and what they did shook me to my core.

My belief system was fractured. My sense of discernment was cracked. I found myself asking, How could I have missed it? Who am I if these were the people who helped mold me?

That experience was the beginning of what I now call my cocoon season, a time of painful shedding and uncomfortable stillness. Everything I had known felt like it no longer fit. But like the caterpillar that enters the cocoon, everything messy inside had a purpose: transformation.

To move forward, I had to stop denying the pain. I had to face the wound and name the betrayal, not just to grieve it, but to grow through it. I had to embrace the Good in me, even when it felt like everything had fallen apart. That fragile acceptance gave me the ground to grow toward Better, toward honesty, healing, and clarity. And slowly, layer

by layer, I emerged with something resembling Best. Not perfect. But whole. Clear. True.

You see, the goal isn't to avoid being broken. It's to emerge with wings forged from the messiness of struggle and pain, stronger, and better than you were before,

That season didn't destroy me. It defined me. It taught me that becoming fully you isn't about having all the answers. It's about having the courage to recognize change and transform.

Integration Invitation:

- What parts of your story have you been avoiding?
- How might those parts hold the keys to your compassion, wisdom, or influence?
- What would it feel like to live without editing your truth?

Journal Reflection:

Take 20–30 minutes to draw your personal “Whole Story” map. In the center of a blank page, write your name. Then create spokes radiating outward, each labeled with a major life event, role, or turning point (e.g., "First big failure," "Caretaker season," "Faith shift," "Career pivot," etc.).

Next to each spoke, jot down:

- What did I learn here?
- What part of myself did I meet or reclaim?
- How did this shape who I am today?

Once you're done, take a step back and observe the full picture. What patterns do you see? What stories connect? What do you need to own more fully?

Chapter 8: Legacy in Motion - Live It Forward

Legacy isn't a destination, it's a daily practice.
It's not something you build after you "make it."
It's how you show up, today, tomorrow, and the quiet in-between.

You may think you're not ready to leave a legacy.
Maybe you feel too broken, too unsure, too unfinished.

But legacy doesn't begin when you're flawless.
It begins when you're faithful.

"I come as one, but I stand as ten thousand." — Maya Angelou

That quote is more than poetry. It's identity. It's permission to rise.
Because when you stand, you don't stand alone.
You carry the voice of every person who ever poured into you. You
become part of the unfolding lineage of courage, healing, and truth.

Let's Talk About "Perfect"

As we start to wrap things up let's pause here and deal with a lie that
keeps people from living boldly: the idea that you must be perfect
before you can be impactful.

The word perfect in its original form doesn't mean flawless.
It means to complete or to bring to wholeness.

Perfection is not about having no cracks, it's about having no missing
pieces.
It's about bringing your full, whole, honest self to the table.
It's not about performance. It's about presence.

When you live your legacy, you are not showing up because you're
finished, you're showing up because you're whole enough to be real.

And real is what transforms people.

Living the Mantra: Good. Better. Best.

This journey began with **Good**, the courage to honor your current truth.
It matured into **Better**, the commitment to grow, to refine, to heal.
And now we walk into **Best**, not as a title to earn, but as a truth to live.

Best isn't perfection.

Best is integrity.

It's alignment.

It's the ongoing decision to let your life reflect what you value most.

You Are the Blueprint Now

You are someone's example.

Legacy happens in the small things:

- Listening when it's inconvenient.
- Showing up with kindness when you're tired.
- Sharing the story that used to bring you shame—but now brings someone else strength.
- Choosing what aligns with your soul even when it costs you comfort.

You are not unfinished, you are in process.

And there is legacy power in that.

Journal Reflection: Live It Loud

Pick one legacy action to take this week. Something that echoes your completion, not your perfection.

Choose one:

- Mentorship — Pass on what you've learned.
- Service — Offer your presence or time where it's needed most.
- Storytelling — Use your voice to free someone else from silence.

- Intentional Presence — Be fully where your feet are.

Legacy is not what you leave behind.
It's what you live forward.

Final Word: Become the Book

You've come this far, not because you're perfect, but because you kept choosing truth.

Let your life echo what you've read.
Let your next step be a testament, not just a continuation.

You are not behind. You are not too late. You are becoming.

So don't just finish this book.
Become this book.

“Good, better, best. Never let it rest, until your good is better and your better is best.” -P. Mitchell

Let your completion, your integrated, healing, growing life be the legacy someone else builds from.

Let's live it forward.

My Benediction Over Your Becoming

I hope you stop shrinking.
I hope you start showing up like you were born to lead.
I hope you forgive yourself and call yourself worthy.

I hope you live the kind of life that heals others by how you hold your own.

I hope you don't wait for permission.
I hope you remember the lessons—and pass them on.

You're not just a survivor.
You're a builder.
You're a mirror.
You're a movement.

Let's keep building together.

Next Steps

To continue your journey:

- Download the Good, Better, Best Companion Guide [Scan the QR Code or visit: goodbetterbestbook.com/tools]
- Join our private online community and share your story: #LiveItForward
- Start a book club using the included discussion questions in the appendix
- Explore the recommended reading list for deeper growth

“Start where you are. Use what you have. Do what you can.” — Arthur Ashe

“Perfection is not attainable, but if we chase perfection we can catch excellence.” — Vince Lombardi

It’s when you begin to clarify your values, not just chase validation. I had to stop performing and start aligning.

“To be yourself in a world that is constantly trying to make you something else is the greatest accomplishment.” — Ralph Waldo Emerson

“Success is the sum of small efforts, repeated day in and day out.” — Robert Collier

“The best way to find yourself is to lose yourself in the service of others.” — Mahatma Gandhi

“I learned that courage was not the absence of fear, but the triumph over it.” — Nelson Mandela

“The wound is the place where the Light enters you.” — Rumi

“What you leave behind is not what is engraved in stone monuments, but what is woven into the lives of others.” — Pericles