

# SUMMARY

## Girl, Stop Apologizing

Rachel Hollis



# **Summary of «Girl, Stop Apologizing» by Rachel Hollis**

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A self-help guide to breaking free from your fears and uncover your inner desires to go after what you want...all without apologizing.



# QuickRead

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# Introduction

In *Girl, Stop Apologizing*, Rachel Hollis tackles changing the way you view yourself. Whether you identify yourself as a wife, mother, daughter, employee, it's time to become more and start chasing your dreams. For too long women have lived in a patriarchal society where women feel the need to ask for permission to accomplish their goals. And because of this, women struggle to step outside of their traditional molds for fear of being different or for fear of failure. Rachel Hollis has seen all too often women who become complacent in their roles of a wife or mother, and she wants to teach you how to live up to your full potential. For instance, many women believe that to be a good mother then they must devote themselves fully to their family and put their dreams on the backburner. But, it's time to stop apologizing and begin unleashing your inner desires.

No matter your dream of starting a company, running a marathon, starting a blog, or writing a book, you can learn how to take Hollis' actionable advice and apply her steps to help you achieve your goals.

# Stop Comparing Yourself and Making Excuses

What's the definition of an excuse? An attempt to lessen the blame attached to a fault or offense; seek to defend or justify. 2. Release someone from a duty or requirement. Some synonyms also include: justify, defend, condone, and vindicate.

Rachel Hollis introduces the many excuses that you make that are stopping you from achieving your goals. Imagine if our excuses didn't exist! What if we lived in a world where women followed their dreams despite their excuses like "I don't have time" or "I'm a mom, so I'm too busy." Imagine how the world would be a much different, yet better, place.

The first excuse we tell ourselves is "that's not what other women do." Stop comparing yourself to others, just because other women are doing something different than you, doesn't mean that what you are doing is wrong. In fact, you might be doing something revolutionary! Hollis recounts the moment she started her blog. She had no idea what she was doing, but after making a few mistakes, her niche started to come along and she began to receive small offers for advertisements. So she began to write a mommy blog in addition to having her own business; however, when fans found out that she wasn't just a mom, people turned angry. How can you be the "perfect" mom and also run your own business? Eventually, Hollis realized she needed to stop apologizing for herself. She didn't need to fit the mold of what was expected of women in our society. When she quieted that inner voice, she began to blossom and become the successful person she is today.

The second excuse is "I'm not a goal-oriented person." Everyone has a dream, they dream of taking a grand vacation, of getting that promotion, or of starting that business. All of which can be scary, but those dreams are your goals! Hollis even says "a goal is a dream you've decided to make real. A goal is a destination you're working toward instead of an idea you're considering or hoping for." So once you realize that your dreams can become a

reality, you can become that “goal-oriented” person that you wish you could be.

The third excuse is “I don’t have the time.” The truth is, none of us have the time. We are all busy people on the go, especially when you become a mom. However, the key is to make the time for the things that matter. Whether it’s working on the weekends or working late at night, you can make the time. It might not be enjoyable, but it will be worth it in the end. The best way to begin “finding” the time is to make a timeline of your current week. Carve out five hours per week to work on your goal. Make sure those five hours are when you work best and when you are most productive, and put your five hours in the ideal time slot for you.

# Don't Let Fear Stop You

Our least favorite four-letter word, the one that begins with “f.” No, not the one you’re thinking of, I’m talking about fear. It’s a common struggle that all women deal with, we struggle with insecurities of how we look, think, act, and it can become both exhausting and dangerous.

The next excuse that we use is the excuse of “I’m not good enough.” To overcome this fear that we all struggle with, you should reflect on all your past successes. Rid yourself of your limiting beliefs and remind yourself that you can do it. The real problem lies not in your lack of accomplishments, but your failure to recognize all that you have done. By celebrating your accomplishments, you can begin to change your mindset and realize that you are worthy of reaching your goals.

“I can’t pursue my dream and still be a good mom/daughter/employee.” It’s true that many women experience “mommy guilt” and give up on their aspirations of higher education or career plans to be what they believe is a “better” mom. But mommy guilt is just another name for the expectation that women feel to give up their passions and dreams to stay home and raise a family. We worry about what other people will think if we try to accomplish our goals and be a good mom. Society makes us believe that we have to sacrifice one or the other, but that’s just simply not true.

The last fear that we have to overcome is the fear of failure. Messing up is scary, but it’s the only way that you can learn and grow. In fact, everyone fails sometimes, even Rachel Hollis shares one of her most public failures. One of her dreams was to get one of her books on the New York Times Bestseller List. Yet, even with 850,000 people on her mailing list that were sharing and hashtagging their love of the book, it didn’t happen. She felt like a public failure and succumbed to the feeling of embarrassment and that she wasn’t good enough. But ten weeks later, the book finally made the list.

During those ten weeks, Hollis learned that failure isn't as bad as it may seem. In fact, that initial failure made her realize that she can handle the embarrassment that comes with failure and it allowed her to grow confidence that she never felt before. Ultimately, your fears of failure, embarrassment, and not being good enough are all in your head. Only you know what is best for you, and most people don't care what you're doing anyway!

# Don't Worry About Judgment

As a child, you are taught many lessons about life and are told about the many rules that you have to follow. Some are simple, like “be polite” and “use your manners.” However, some become more complicated and teach us that “good girls” are expected to act in a certain way. For instance, when you look back at the many rules placed on women, you will see how women were expected to keep out of conversations about wealth and money. Instead, women were expected to be demure and keep their noses out of other people’s business. While these etiquettes are certainly changing, they still dominate the expectations that are placed on women today.

For instance, growing up society teaches us that boys should chase their dreams and girls should chase boys. In other words, if you want to achieve your goals then you will need to go against society’s archaic rules. This leads us to our next excuse, “good girls don’t hustle.” With quotes like “well-behaved women rarely make history,” Hollis reminds you that you will have to go against the grain and defy expectations to chase your dreams, don’t just chase boys. Many great women throughout history like Sojourner Truth, Oprah, and Beyonce all had to do this, and you will too if you want to be successful.

“It’s been done before.” This is one of the worst excuses that you can tell yourself. We’ve been trained to think that seeing other people succeed means we are now in competition with them. However, we rarely see how those people became successful. Instead, find out what someone else has done and use it as a roadmap to guide our own success. Study their model and perhaps see how you can improve it!

And lastly, you may find yourself wondering “what will they think?” Think about it this way. There are only two types of people in the world: judgmental and non-judgmental. Judgmental people will never be happy, and they will always have an opinion about others. The second type, they don’t really

care about what you are doing, as long as you're happy. So at the end of the day, who really matters? You!

Inevitably, you will encounter negative opinions as you try to chase your dreams, so it's important to look at those opinions carefully. When you receive a negative opinion, ask yourself first, "is this coming from a place of love?" If it is, don't accept it until you are sure it is based in fact. Now, on the other hand, you may receive negative opinions that are downright destructive. Forget these opinions altogether. Dispel opinions that have no basis and are meant to solely tear you down. This will give you the freedom to distinguish between pure negativity and constructive criticism. Focus on the latter, grow from the criticism, and do better.

# **Adopt New Behaviors and Go All In**

What is the definition of behavior? 1. The way in which one acts or conducts oneself, especially toward others. 2. The way in which an animal or person acts in response to a particular situation or stimulus. Some synonyms for behavior include conduct, deportment, actions, and doings. So why begin this chapter with the definition of behavior? Well, your behaviors are critical in helping you change your habits and adopting successful behaviors. By changing your behavior, you can become closer to pursuing your dreams.

First, you'll need to stop asking for permission. Whether you admit it or not, you have been taught by society to recognize the voice of authority, probably that of a man. Authority is personified as a man, and it could be the strong voice of your father or even that of your husband. For Hollis, she spent the first ten years of her marriage asking her husband to do anything, even going to the grocery store. But as a woman, Hollis realized she has the authority to follow her goals and you do too. All women are allowed to do what they need to do to become the best version of themselves. This includes telling your partner what you're going to do instead of asking for permission.

The second good behavior to adopt is to choose one dream and go all in. It's only human to have a list of different things you would like to achieve. You may find yourself attempting to achieve a goal, and when it doesn't work out, you don't think of it as a devastating loss because you may have several other goals lined up. You always have a plan B. While this may seem good in theory, it actually pulls you further away from achieving your goals. As Hollis puts it "when everything is important, then nothing is important." But don't worry, Hollis has a strategy to help you figure out how to tackle one project at a time.

Adopt the 10, 10, 1 plan to pick the right project you want to focus on. Think ahead 10 years from now and imagine what you want your life to look like. Really visualize it, think about the details and write down everything about

your future life from your physical self to your home and family. Now think of ten dreams that would make that version of your future a reality. From those ten dreams, which one is the most important? That's the one goal you want to focus on. Ten years, ten dreams, one goal.

To help make this exercise even more effective, make your goals as specific as possible. It's not enough to just say "I want to lose weight" or "I want to save more money." Instead, specify a specific body fat percentage you want to get down to or specify your bank balance. Saying "I have \$10,000" in my savings account is much more clear and obtainable. Lastly, you should change your wording from "I want" or "I wish" to "I have." By changing "I want to lose thirty pounds" to "I have lost thirty pounds" it will become a more powerful daily motivator to keep going.

# Build Foundations For Success

“It takes a village.” You’ve probably heard this phrase throughout your life, and as you get older you may realize the significance behind it. For instance, when you start a new job, do you automatically know everything? Or maybe you’re a mom, can you do everything yourself? As much as you would like to think that you can, it’s inevitable that you will have to do the one thing you hate to do. Ask for help.

Sometimes we have to rely on others, and that’s perfectly okay. Maybe you need a babysitter or you need someone to proofread a document, whatever the help looks like, don’t be afraid to ask. Our worst enemy is the media who make us believe that women have it all together, that they are perfect and they can do it all. But the reality is, everyone needs help and women are afraid to ask for it. Hollis reminds us that no one is truly “self-made,” everyone has had a line of support or a mentor in their life that helped them along the way. So don’t be embarrassed to ask for help, we all need it sometimes.

But even with all the help in the world, it will be in vain if you don’t develop some foundations for success. One of the pillars of success is health. Both physically and mentally, Rachel Hollis’ foundations include drinking half her body weight in water a day, waking up earlier than her children, giving up one category of food for thirty days to practice keeping promises for a month, moving her body at least 30 minutes a day, and practicing gratitude daily by writing down ten things she is grateful for.

Other foundations include keeping a clean personal space. A clean home teaches a standard of self-respect to yourself and others, so just do it. Next, build a great community around you. The five people you hang out with most are the ones who influence you, so surround yourself with people who educate you and enlighten you to be the best version of yourself.

One of the best foundations of success is establishing a productive morning routine. Chances are if you wake up to chaos then the chaos will follow you throughout the day. For Hollis, her ideal morning starts with her waking up at 5:00 a.m. and utilizing this time to meditate, write in her journal and write down her 10,10,1 dreams before her kids wake up. Then once she gets the kids fed and off to school, she will put on some music and have her morning smoothie and plan the day ahead. By planning a morning routine, you set the rest of your day up for success.

Finally, learn to say no. Your priorities should guide you and you should reject anything that doesn't align with them. If you find that your immediate response isn't an all-out 'yes,' then you should politely and honestly say no. Avoid maybes, and be as honest as possible. You'll avoid wasted time and spend your time on the things that truly matter to you and ensure your success.

# Planning, Confidence, Consistency

Now that we've discussed the excuses that you make and the behaviors to adopt, it's time to discuss the skills to acquire. The dictionary defines skill as the ability to do something well. And like most skills, they will need to be practiced and developed. Skills are not innate gifts that people are born with, so remember that some skills may take more time to develop than others.

The first skill is planning. How do you know where you're going? Nowadays you might use apps like Waze and Google Maps to find your way. So think of planning as a GPS map. Identify your final destination or goal, and work your way backward. Think about what needs to happen to get to your destination and set up mile markers along the way. These mile markers will become the steps you take to reach your goal, so start by brainstorming as much as you can. Then take a look at your list and narrow it down to just three of the most important mile markers. Don't get too caught up in brainstorming, just take a step in the right direction according to your roadmap.

The second skill is confidence. Hollis tells us that the confidence between men and women is drastically different. For example, she tells us about a recent study that showed men will apply for a job if they feel they meet 60 percent of the qualifications. However, women will only apply if they think they are 100 percent qualified. So even if you don't meet the qualifications perfectly, there is always room to grow at the job. Employers are more concerned that you are willing to learn, grow, and fit in with the work environment.

Take Rachel Hollis' example of when she accepted a catering gig at the Sundance Film Festival. Hollis' experience was in event-planning, so she wasn't the most qualified to do catering. However, she had confidence that her event-planning skills could carry over into the catering world, and she was right! Her catering gig was a success. So while she wasn't 100 percent

qualified to take that gig, she was willing to learn and grow. Most importantly, she had the confidence that she could do it.

Hollis's next reminder is that life is a marathon, not a sprint. Persistence is a key skill that will help you achieve your goals. While timelines are important, you must remember that your best and biggest achievements will often take years of constant work to achieve them. By putting in persistent work every day for weeks, months, and years then your persistence will eventually add up to your overall success.

# Effectiveness, Positivity, Lead-Header-Ship

How many times do you find yourself scrolling Instagram, Facebook, or YouTube to realize hours have passed? You wonder where the last few hours went. Well, you're not alone, we are all guilty of wasting time one way or another. This is why Hollis believes the next skill you need to adopt is effectiveness. Here are some ways that you can begin practicing effectiveness in your daily life.

Define your results. So let's say you want to write a book. Instead of saying "today I'll work on my book," set goals like "today I'll write 2,000 words" and you'll find that you'll be more likely to accomplish your goal. However, it might not be enough to just define your goals. Continue to practice effectiveness by creating your own environment that will promote productivity. Some people believe you need a designated space, but Hollis thinks that's unrealistic in our busy lives, so make your "space" portable to put you in the zone no matter where you are. Create a productive playlist, drink a specific coffee drink, or chew gum to zone life out and zone in on your project.

Know your distractions. Know the things that distract you, so turn off your Wi-Fi to avoid wanting to binge that new Netflix series or scroll through social media. Don't beat yourself up if you do get sidetracked, check-in with yourself and change course as necessary.

Next, I'm sure you can agree when I tell you that life is hard. We can easily fall into a spiral of negative thinking when things outside our control begin to affect us. But you can control the way you respond. This leads us to the next skill: positivity. Positivity is a choice about what you allow yourself to think about and what you choose to push away. Actively monitor the way you talk to yourself and hold back from negative self-talk. And when it comes to those outside forces that are trying to knock you down, don't let them win. Instead, practice positivity and gratitude by surrounding yourself with people who support and nourish you. Write down ten things you are grateful for at the end of each day and focus on the positives.

Finally, it's time to adopt a female power shift. Hollis remembers girls not being encouraged to become leaders, and while times have certainly changed since Hollis was a young girl, there is still a major cultural shift that needs to happen. If your view of a leader is someone that doesn't look like you, then shift your way of thinking because you can be a leader. You have the ability to change the world and blaze a new path for the generations to come.

# **Final Summary**

In a world where women feel they have to choose between their dreams and a family, it's time to stop apologizing for going after what you want. For too long women have had to apologize for not fitting into the traditional molds that society has placed on women. You don't have to settle and do what society expects of you, you can follow your dreams, and you don't have to ask for permission to do so. Stop making excuses for yourself and practice adopting the appropriate behaviors like building a foundation for success and asking for help when you need it. Finally, practice acquiring the proper skills like planning, consistency, and effectiveness to work your way towards accomplishing your goals.



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