



**BIBLIOTHERAPY
PRESCRIPTION FOR:
HOW TO GET UNSTUCK**



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Stuck is transformation's enemy # 1.

That's because stuck is, qualitatively speaking, much more defeating and depleting than even stasis or inertia. Stuck indicates that you have a goal, or a new venture or an old habit or pattern you want to change, but:

- You can't seem to make it happen
- You don't know exactly what to do next
- You try and try to make the change, but keep hitting the same walls or
- You try and try to make the change, but keep being derailed in a colorful array of new and frustrating ways.

When we say something is stuck, we often refer to it as being pinned between two things (i.e. a rock and a hard place) or mired in something sticky (i.e., the mud). The experience of being stuck in life or on a project can be the same – we get pinned tight between stories about the future that we create based on our past, or we get stuck in the quagmire of behavior or relationship patterns that no longer serve us.

Getting unstuck – and maintaining the ability to move through life and work freely and easily – involves a number of mindset resets and ongoing practices. For me, what works is:

1. Maintaining a low tolerance level for staying in dysfunctional situations
2. Staying willing to look at every assumption and relationship and situation in my life and my business as “on the table” (i.e., subject to examination and whatever level of change is indicated), and
3. Constantly exposing myself to materials from wildly different fields (from Ephesians to the Quantified Self movement), which helps me draw novel connections and think flexibly in coming up with solutions to business and life challenges, rather than getting stuck or spinning on what's not working.

But 'unstuck' is not a one-shot deal. It's an approach—a worldview that takes constant cultivation. Here, I've prescribed some deeper-dive resources for getting unstuck and staying there.


Enjoy!




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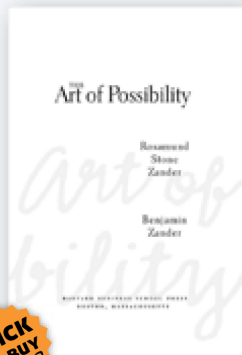
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 Twitter: Stuck on a problem? Stuck in a cycle? @taranicholle curates and prescribes books, videos, blogs to get you in action: <http://ow.ly/ckt2N>

 Facebook/LinkedIn: Tara-Nicholle Nelson uses BiblioTherapy to prescribe the cures for 'Stuck': <http://ow.ly/ckt2N>

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CLICK TO BUY

THE ART OF POSSIBILITY

TRANSFORMING PERSONAL AND PROFESSIONAL LIFE

Rosamund Stone Zander and Benjamin Zander

HOW IT WILL GET YOU UNSTUCK:

By equipping you with a toolkit of interpersonal practices – Practices in Possibility – with the proven power to cause “a total shift of posture, perceptions, belief, and thought processes.” If you can begin to glimpse that the scope of what’s possible in your life or business might be bigger than what you’re currently living, but you’re at a loss for how to realize that larger scope, the Practices in Possibility are a powerful place to start action, now.

Written by a husband wife duo, Rosamund (therapist specializing in accomplishment and family issues) and Benjamin (the virtuoso conductor of the Boston Philharmonic orchestra), *The Art of Possibility* is “about transforming your entire world.” The Zanders liberally douse their step-by-step tutorials of each practice with examples in which the practices were applied, to great success, to:

- liberate Benjamin’s New England Conservatory of Music students from their obsession with their grades, allowing them to take creative risks like never before;
- to resolve their own husband-wife arguments;
- to teach the nuance of Beethoven’s Fifth Symphony to a gaggle of youngsters from inner-city London; and
- to bring the partners of a medial research firm to resolution on a contract impasse that threatened the survival of their partnership, and the company.

Each step is clearly explained, and will create a massive mindset and behavioral shift on the part of those who apply them. These shifts move mountains.

EXCEPTIONAL EXCERPTS:

“Never doubt the capacity of the people you lead to accomplish whatever you dream for them.”

—Ben, on transformational leadership

“The only grace you can have is the grace you can imagine.”

—Roz, on the practice of freely granting others an unearned A grade

IF YOU ONLY HAVE 20 MINUTES, READ:

The Eleventh Practice: Creating Frameworks for Possibility, illuminates the downward spiral caused by fear, scarcity and ferocious competition, and instructs us on a 3-step practice, Framing Possibility, that opens up what the Zanders call “the radiant realm of possibility in the face of any challenge.” It is intended for leaders (like managers and entrepreneurs), but will flick amazing switches in the minds of those who want to lead something as “small” as their families, or themselves.

THIS BOOK IS RIGHT FOR:

- Organizational managers and leaders
- Parents and spouses
- Anyone trying to do something that’s hard to envision or something others say is impossible, in any context (business, personal, societal, etc.)

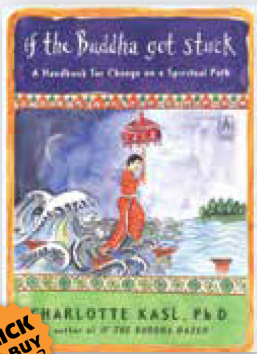
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Don’t miss the Sixth Practice, which teaches us how to lighten up, get over our own drama (i.e., “childish entitlements and demands”) and be “instantly transported into a remarkable universe [, which is] cooperative in nature and pulls for the realization of all our cooperative dreams.”



Also, don’t miss Benjamin Zander’s TED Talk, which TED prefaces as follows: “Benjamin Zander has two infectious passions: classical music, and helping us all realize our untapped love for it -- and by extension, our untapped love for all new possibilities, new experiences, new connections.”

I’ll preface it by saying – he says ‘buttock’ in this video – a lot. It’s very entertaining, and sneakily profound.



CLICK
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IF THE BUDDHA GOT STUCK

A HANDBOOK FOR CHANGE ON A SPIRITUAL PATH

Charlotte Kasl, Ph.D.

HOW IT WILL GET YOU UNSTUCK:

Let me count the ways! For almost a decade now, this has been my go-to resource for blasting through sticking points in personal and professional relationships, on work projects, and even in hard, life-changing decisions. I have used it so much, my first copy fell apart!

Psychotherapist Kasl creates an orderly sequence of mindset recalibrations and concrete actions steps, big and small, for unleashing flow and creating change. These steps, this path and the book are inspired by Buddhist thinking, but are certainly applicable to the lives of readers across the spiritual spectrum, from atheists to Baptists. Kasl posits that “The purpose of life is to be alive,” and from there weaves an unsticking system that frees us from the suffering and pain of squelching our own potential.

Kasl’s seven steps and dozens upon dozens of strategies for getting unstuck shift both thoughts and actions. Kasl helps us:

- understand the difference between being stuck and floundering
- identify some big ways we’re benefitting from staying stuck
- and step out of our own way, releasing thinking, relationships and habits that sabotage our efforts at change, one tiny step at a time.

EXCEPTIONAL EXCERPTS:

“People often talk about how hard it is to change. It is and it isn’t. Change requires deep questioning, internal shifts, giving up the known and often the images of who we think we are. But many acts of change - the small shifts and first steps that can add up to something much bigger - can be surprisingly easy. And not changing is even harder. Think about it. What does it cost you to constantly censor the parts of you that want to stretch, adventure, and express themselves?”

IF YOU ONLY HAVE 20 MINUTES, READ:

The Seven Steps of “If the Buddha Got Stuck” are broken down into 62 micro-chapters, most of which are just two or three pages long. This is my short list of don’t miss micro-chapters:

- Chp 4. Traits of People Who Stay Unstuck. . .At Least Most of the Time
- Chp 6. Am I Stuck or Am I Floundering: What’s the Difference?
- Chp 7. What Makes Change So Scary? Explore the Payoffs That Keep You Stuck
- Chp 8. Step Beyond Your Fears
- Chp 43. Manage Your Energy, Not Just Your Time
- Chp 46. Release Yourself of Roadblocks and Negative Thinking

THIS BOOK IS RIGHT FOR:

- Anyone who’s been stuck on anything, from a single project to a massive life change
- Those seeking specific actions they can take to move forward in life
- People who crave to manage their own thoughts more effectively

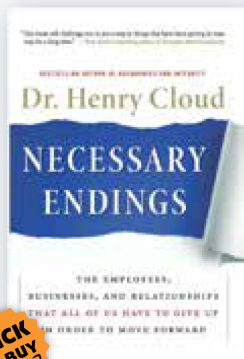
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The list of traits and thinking patterns that keep people stuck or unstuck (pp 11-17) will undoubtedly create an a-ha moment, and if Kasl’s discussion of the internal, alchemical fires of transformation (pp 146-147) don’t cause you to crave change and get ready for action, I don’t know what will.

On the fires and alchemy involved in transformation, becoming a contribution to the planet and the ridiculousness of living within the boundaries of being “realistic,” —an unlikely source—*Will Smith*:



Julia Cameron, author of *The Artists’ Way* on her 3, core tools for “creative recovery,” (i.e., overcoming writer’s and business block) which millions of writers and other creatives have used for decades: <http://ow.ly/cow4v>



NECESSARY ENDINGS

THE EMPLOYEES, BUSINESSES, AND RELATIONSHIPS THAT ALL OF US HAVE TO GIVE UP IN ORDER TO MOVE FORWARD

Dr. Henry Cloud

HOW IT WILL GET YOU UNSTUCK:

If I've learned anything over the past two decades, it's that one of the most common, most ominous ways we keep ourselves from profiting and thriving at our highest potential is by failing to recognize relationships and endeavors that simply are not working – and failing to take action to end them. To this serious disease, Necessary Endings is a much-needed antidote.

Dr. Cloud provides a philosophical foundation powerful enough to cause the most habit-entrenched individual to rethink the core nature of their commitment to people, projects and things that are not working. Then, he provides very clear, broadly applicable guidance on how to understand:

- when hope for change is warranted, and when an ending is necessary
- how to cultivate a sense of urgency and an action plan that overcomes resistance and prioritizes what's truly important
- and – most usefully – how to pinpoint the personal relationships, employees, business divisions and activities, even projects that are worth investing further effort, time and money into – and which are not.

Endings are necessary, even if we experience them as so painful that our personal or professional M.O. is to persist in throwing good money, time, energy and emotions after bad. Dr. Cloud equips us to face reality, and provides specific processes and action plans for pruning away the offshoots of our personal and professional lives that drain resources, keep us stuck in dysfunctional situations and prevent us from thriving.

EXCEPTIONAL EXCERPTS:

“If you are looking for the formula that can get you motivated and fearless, here it is: you must finally see reality for what it is – in other words, that what is not working is not going to magically begin working. If something isn't working, you must admit that what you are doing to get it to work is hopeless.

The awareness of hopelessness is what finally brings people to the reality of the pruning moment. It is the moment when they wake up, realize that an ending must occur, and finally feel energized to do it. Nothing mobilizes us like a firm dose of reality. . .

”

IF YOU ONLY HAVE 20 MINUTES, READ:

Chapter 7, The Wise, the Foolish, and the Evil: Identifying Which Kinds of People Deserve Your Trust. This 30-page chapter might take you more than 30 minutes to read, but it makes Necessary Endings one of the wisest, most instantly-useful books. I defy you to read this chapter and not look at every individual you know, and your investment in your relationship with them, through the lens it provides.

It will help you stop unconscious or self-defeating relationship patterns and make wiser choices about who you invest your time and energy in -- in your business and personal life.

THIS BOOK IS RIGHT FOR:

- Organizational managers and leaders
- Parents and spouses
- People stuck in the process of business and personal transformation
- Anyone trying to do what others say is impossible, in any context
- Men and women

MULTIMEDIA + MORE

Marketing savant Seth Godin's [The Dip: A Little Book That Teaches You When to Quit \(and When to Stick\)](#) deals in detail with “strategic quitting,” or quitting something in order to achieve your goal. He has pithy, but powerful, blog posts on the matter as it applies in business and for brands, [here](#) and [here](#).

And if you still need some more inspiration to quit something difficult, here's a [video of Oprah](#), delivering the 2008 Commencement Address at Stanford University – at 17:39, she talks about “getting it on the whisper”. Here's the transcript.

