

MY DAILY *yes*TM

My calling: _____



PREPARE FOR THE DAY: Personal growth reading, chart priorities, breakfast & exercise	5:00 am		
	6:00		
	7:00		
PRODUCTIVE: Work on number 1 priority	8:00		
	9:00		
	10:00		
	11:00		
LUNCH	12:00pm		
INTERACTIVE: More work on number 1 priority; communications time	1:00		
	2:00		
	3:00		
	4:00		
FAMILY TIME: Screens off	5:00		
	6:00		
	7:00		
WRAP UP: Tie up loose ends	8:00		
REST AND RELAX WITH FAMILY	9:00		
	10:00		

CHAPTER 4 (excerpt)

GETTING IT ALL DONE WITHOUT LOSING YOUR MIND

The One Small Yes Toolbox

"You have to have the right tool for the job." – Paul Averill

If I heard my dad say that phrase once while I was growing up I heard him say it a thousand times. A truck driver by trade, my dad was a builder at heart. He spent years remodeling my childhood home before building a houseboat to cruise the Mississippi River with ease. When he was done re-building the inside of our house he used his skills to build a playhouse for my sister. He also built his own kitchen cabinets, toy boxes, bookcases, gates and more. No matter the project I always remember him saying, "Misty, you have to have the right tool for the job."

Your job, my friend, is to pursue your calling—that one thing that you and only you we're created to do in this world. If you are going to build something that will have a profound impact on your family, your community and the world you live in, you are going to need the right tool for the job[c6] .

Getting it all done without losing your mind

It was just a few days past the spring recital in the early days of my business. My husband and I were walking through Sam's Club with our one-year-old in tow. We walked slowly through the electronics while my daughter babbled and pointed at all of the shiny objects. On the outside we probably looked like a regular family out for an afternoon of shopping. My husband was saying something about the various sizes of flat screen TVs, but in my head a different conversation was taking place, and it went something like this:

"I am going to lose my mind. Right here in the middle of Sam's Club."

To give you a bit of context, I had just survived my third year of recitals, auditions, class placements and registration—a two-week marathon of serving our families around the clock. I worked hard to keep up with emails while my daughter watched Elmo in the morning and tried to take care of important calls during her afternoon nap. Sleep was low and emotions were high. I watched my daughter happily play with something in the cart at Sam's Club that day and tried to convince myself I was going to be okay.

I made it home that afternoon, but not through the night. I finally broke, admitting to my husband I simply could not get everything done. I was trying to be a full-time stay-at-home mom, a full-time entrepreneur and a full-time dance teacher—and I didn't feel like I was doing a good job at any of those

roles. I even entertained the idea of giving up on my calling and closing the doors. My husband, being the sweet, logical person that he is, listened patiently and then sent me to bed.

With some sleep under my belt, I was able to sit down with him the next day and have a productive conversation. Of course, I did not want to give up on my calling! That was the last thing I wanted to do, but neither did I want to lose my family or my mind. Something had to give—and that something was my irrational expectation that I needed to be, or even could be, everything to everybody all of the time. And, so the first tool had been added to my One Small Yes Toolbox:

Tool #1 – Lower your expectations

Lower your expectations? If you're honest that's probably not what you expected to hear as my number one tip for pursuing your calling one small yes at a time.

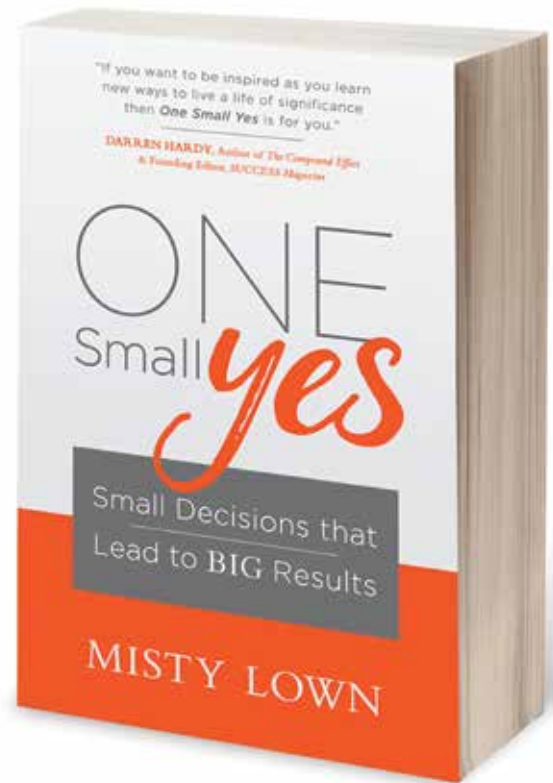
But, actually, it fits perfectly.

You see when I said that one small yes to open my dance studio and let the classroom be my stage, I considered following my calling a black-and-white, yes-or-no proposition. There was no room for any grey in the pursuit of the dream. But, at some point my desire to do the very best job I could for every child and class went beyond a healthy discipline and focus. I wasn't just chasing high expectations anymore, I was chasing perfection, and in doing so I had created an impossible situation for myself.

My husband's advice to lower my expectations was the most motivating lifeline I could've been given in that dark time. I wasn't going to be able to please everybody all of the time, so I gave myself permission to drop the impossible goal of a 100% approval rating. For Pete sake, if the President of the United States can barely crack the 50% margin most years, I could learn to be happy with the 90% of people who appreciated how I ran my business.

I also lowered my expectation that I would be able to always know what the right decision should be every time. Business is not science. It's people and relationships—and that takes some navigating. I also accepted that I wasn't going to always be able to be on site at the business and I wasn't going to be able to do everything for my family by myself at home. This meant I would need help on both fronts and I would need to trust other people to make decisions in my absence.

Bringing my expectations into perspective so many years ago has allowed me to pursue my calling over the long-haul without losing my family or my mind. If I hadn't lowered my impossible expectations I most certainly would've folded under the pressure of perfection and thousands of local children and hundreds of thousands of dancers worldwide would have missed out on the positive message of my calling.



The balancing act lie

In 2013, famed aerialist Nik Wallenda attempted the first televised Grand Canyon tight rope walk in history. Even though I knew there was a 10 second delay on the live broadcast in case something might go tragically wrong, I still couldn't manage to watch the show with both eyes open. Through one eye, I could see that Nik had made it partway across the small line when he started to experience some reverberations. As the wind kicked up in the canyon, the waves in the line grew stronger forcing Nik to hunker down in order to regain his balance. After several more starts and stops, and a few moments where it looked like he might not make it to the other side, Nik completed his daring quest as the audiences across the country cheered from the safety of their homes.

As I watched the broadcast I viewed it through two different lenses. One part of me was fully engaged with my family; fascinated by this daring superhero who put his life on the line to fulfill what he felt was his calling—carry on his grandfather's legacy of aerial feats. The other part of me couldn't help but to find similarities between tight rope walking and entrepreneurship—the path I had chosen to fulfill MY calling. In entrepreneurship, like tightrope walking, the goal is far away, the risks are real, and there are times when the very best thing you can do is to hunker down and wait for the waves in your rope to stop before you start again.

I'm not the first person to make this observation. I've heard it said many times that having a career and

ONE SMALL YES EXCERPT CONTINUED>

"I firmly believe that if I had not gotten comfortable being off-balance, I would still be carefully dividing small pieces of myself between home and the studio and More Than Just Great Dancing® would never have been created."



running a home is a balancing act. It's a statement that made a lot of sense to me as I started following my calling and growing my family. My balance strategy was to divide my time and energy into enough small pieces that I could parcel them out equally between the two areas of my life.

What I came to realize over time, however, was that nobody wanted just a small piece of me and I didn't feel complete giving only part of myself to each of the important areas of my life. By the time the fourth child was born, the balancing act was over. It was simply not possible to balance work from home or to bring my home into the workplace any more. It was time to give up the mythical balancing act and learn to become comfortable being off-balance, which leads me to the second tool in the One Small Yes Toolbox:

Tool #2: Get comfortable being off-balance.

I stopped imagining the relationship between my home and my work as a nervous tightrope walk and replaced that imagery with the sense of being on a teeter-totter—the kind you would find in an old school park. One side of the teeter-totter might be up or down, but you can only be on one side at a time. I started my teeter-totter approach by hiring help at my house so I could be fully present when I was at the studio. When I got home, I tried to discipline myself to turn off messages so I could engage with the family.

But, even with the extra help at home and better boundaries regarding work, I was still divided into too many pieces. When my fifth child arrived I knew it was time to take my comfort with being off-balance up another notch. This time it was to take myself off the regular teaching schedule and be home with my kids at night. This might not sound like a big change, but I had been in a dance studio almost every night of the week since I was a middle school student. But, the change was necessary because our children were becoming school age and I didn't want to miss out on their growing up years and activities.

The decision was a hard one both emotionally and economically. I had to remind myself that I wasn't giving up on my calling to have a positive impact on children just because somebody else would be leading the classroom. When clients or colleagues questioned my decision, I would answer, "I can always make another dance or get paid for another class, but I'll never get a second chance to raise my children." I said yes to put my calling on the shelf while I pursued the most important work I could do at the time: raising my kids.

The change left me feeling lonely at times and off-balance most of the time, but I was at peace knowing I was following the best yes for my life at the time. With a capable team in place to run the daily operations of the business, I spent a year squarely in an off-balance position. I still had regular contact and responsibility with my studio, but my evenings were now spent taking care of my own children and my days were now open to other pursuits. I wrote articles for magazines, spoke at various events and took calls from other studio owners who struggled with the same things I had in the early years: the weight of impossible expectations and the lie of the balancing act.

My mind started to wonder if what we had built locally, and the story of following my calling one small yes at a time, could somehow help other studio owners around the country follow their callings as well. For eighteen months I dreamed about how I could translate the lessons I had learned and the resources I had created to other studio owners and the idea for More Than Just Great Dancing® Affiliated Studios was born.

I firmly believe that if I had not gotten comfortable being off-balance, I would still be carefully dividing small pieces of myself between home and the studio and More Than Just Great Dancing® would never have been created."

Continued in the best selling book One Small Yes!