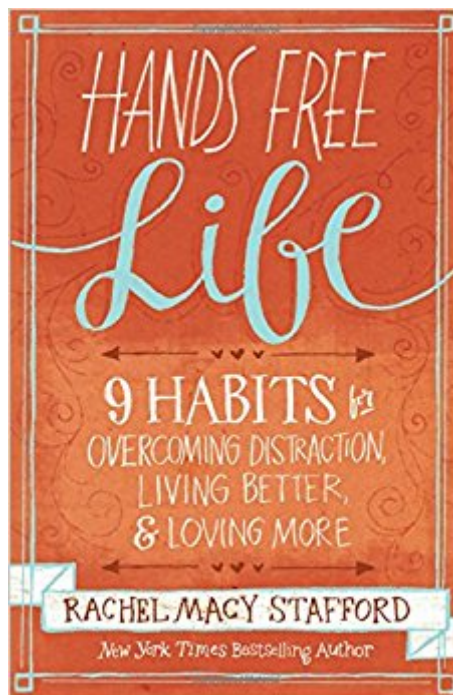




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# Hands Free Life: Nine Habits For Overcoming Distraction, Living Better, And Loving More



## Synopsis

We all yearn to look back to find we lived a life of significance. But is it even possible anymore? Considering the amount of distraction and pressure that exists in society today, living a fulfilling life may seem like an unachievable dream. But it is not—•not with the nine habits outlined in this book. New York Times bestselling author and widely known blogger, Rachel Macy Stafford, reveals nine habits that help you focus on investing in the most significant parts of your life. As your hands, heart, and eyes become open, you will experience a new sense of urgency—•an urgency to live, love, dream, connect, create, forgive, and flourish despite the distractions of our culture. By following each daily Hands Free Declaration, you will be inspired to adopt mindful daily practices and new thought-processes that will help you:—•

- Make meaningful, lasting human connections despite the busyness of everyday life.
- Live in the now despite that inner nudge pushing you out of the moment toward perfection and productivity.
- Protect your most sacred relationships, as well as your values, beliefs, health, and happiness, despite the latent dangers of technology and social media.
- Pursue the passions of your heart without sacrificing your job or your daily responsibilities.
- Evaluate your daily choices to insure you are investing in a life that matters to you.

With a Hands Free Life perspective, you will have the power to look back and see you didn't—•,et just manage life, you actually lived it—•and lived it well.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Our society's definition of success---in which success is defined just in terms of money and power---isn't working. With a mix of powerful storytelling and practical tools, Hands Free Life offers the inspiration and the daily actions to live our lives with more grace, more joy, more gratitude, and more love. (Arianna Huffington, author of Thrive) Rachel does it again! As I read Hands Free Life, I felt my pulse slow, my lungs fill, and my anxiety lessen. Rachel's writing is a Reset button. Her advice is practical, and her message is clear, gentle, and true: Less stress! Less distraction! MORE LOVE! Thanks, Rachel, for reminding us what matters: our people. (Glennon Doyle Melton, author of New York Times bestseller Carry On, Warrior and founder of Momastery.com and Together Rising) In this intensely insightful book, Rachel teaches parents how to engage with their children as they truly deserve: with heart, presence, and grace. Hands Free Life will inspire you to grow with your children and reach depths of your being like never before. Its words will allow you to discover your highest potential as a parent and thereby bestow your children with an inestimable gift: your engaged being. (Dr. Shefali Tsabary, New York Times bestselling author of The Conscious Parent) If you need a clear-minded and clear-hearted guide to a more fulfilling life, this is it. Again, author Rachel Macy Stafford provides us with actionable and meaningful ways to love well, live fully, and leave a legacy we can be proud of. (Patti Digh, author of Life is a Verb and seven other books) Rachel's wise words inspired me to be a more connected, more present parent, and for that I'm so thankful. I'll be handing this out left and right to the people in my life. (Shauna Nequist, bestselling author of Savor and Bread and Wine) It took one day. I only could allow one day to read Hands Free Life. I was busy being a dad, a husband, and a cancer patient. I knew I was distracted, but there was a purpose. I was on a mission, and I acknowledged my limited time. As I settled in to read Rachel's words, my heart stayed in my throat the entire journey. She gets it. She knows we're distracted, and it's not just the number of screens we have in our lives. It's our incredibly complex, crazy, and somewhat out-of-control lives. Rachel Macy Stafford will help you reconnect and build strong relationships. Even if you make a moderate amount of effort, your family will thank you for strengthening your relationships! Once again, I owe Rachel a big thank-you for bringing relationships and family to the forefront of everyone's mind. (Garth Callaghan, The Napkin Notes Dad) Reading Hands Free Life spoke to me at a deep, heart level. It challenged me to stop

hurrying through life, quit worrying about what other people think, and start savoring the ordinary, everyday moments. I smiled through some parts, cried through others, and came away with fresh resolve to make each day count---not in more efficient productivity, but in more meaningful relationships. Highly, highly recommended! (Crystal Paine, founder of MoneySavingMom.com and New York Times bestselling author of Say Goodbye to Survival Mode)

Rachel's words beautifully remind us of the little things---and the big things that make a LIFE. A happier, healthier, more fulfilled life. In Hands Free Life, we are gently but firmly guided to unplug from our 24/7 world and to passionately pursue the connectivity that is so vital to our children, partners, families, friends---and ourselves. Pick it up today---and I promise: you won't want to put it down. (Amy McCready, founder of Positive Parenting Solutions and author of The "Me, Me, Me" Epidemic

A Step-by-Step Guide to Raising Capable, Grateful Kids in an Over-Entitled World) Can I simply say: Read this beautiful book. It will feed your soul, free your spirit, and fill your heart. Hands Free Life is an irresistible wake-up call for all of us who wish to parent more thoughtfully, love more generously, and live more joyously. (Katrina Kenison, author of Mitten Strings for God and The Gift of an Ordinary Day)

With her unique blend of transparent storytelling and thoughtful insight, Rachel Macy Stafford reminds us again why hers is one of the most important voices of our generation. (Joshua Becker, bestselling author of Simplify and founder of Becoming Minimalist)

Hands Free Life is the perfect combination of advice and anecdote. Stafford's personal stories are engaging and enchanting, while her daily declarations serve as their punctuation; reminders that we need to pause and let go of the chaos, ensuring our hands are free to embrace the grace in parenting's small moments. (Jessica Lahey, author of The Gift of Failure)

Rachel has written a beautiful and profoundly wise book, one that heightens our own joy of life and enables our children to fully thrive. (Marilyn Price-Mitchell, PhD, developmental psychologist)

Hands Free Life came to me right when I needed it most. Essentially a road map for intentional living, Rachel's approach, stories, and message are making a difference in my life by teaching me to grasp hold of what really matters. (Ali Edwards, storyteller and author of Life Artist)

I was hooked from the first story. Rachel's writing is like a bear hug from a loving parent---warm, reassuring, full of joy, and a strong reminder of love and security. This book will speak to every loving parent's heart with wisdom and insight that is sure to strengthen every family. (Justin Coulson, PhD, parenting author, researcher, speaker, and father of six)

I want to give this book to every parent I know. Rachel Macy Stafford's gentle spirit and insightful wisdom leaves readers encouraged, inspired, and challenged to cultivate more intentional, present lives. I am a better mother because of Hands Free Life. (Jessica N. Turner, author of The Fringe

Hours) In the midst of countless daily reminders to hurry up and catch up, does it ever feel like all you do is mess up? The message of *Hands Free Life* reads like a gift and a second chance. If you long to linger in your own life but aren't sure where to start, let Rachel Macy Stafford show you how. Her gentle words will cast a hopeful vision for your family, with practical tools to help you create the margin you long for and the relief your soul needs. (Emily P. Freeman, author of *Simply Tuesday: Small-Moment Living in a Fast-Moving World*) Just a couple of chapters into *Hands Free Life*, I learned not to sit down with the book unless I had a box of tissues at the ready.

Rachel's truthful style of storytelling brought me to grateful tears again and again, redirecting my gaze back to the beauty found in my everyday, regular ordinary life and reminding me that perfectionism is not a prerequisite for a hands free journey. Such a freeing message! (Jamie C. Martin, author of *Steady Days* and writer at *SteadyMom.com*) At last---a book about changing habits that didn't leave me overwhelmed and doubtful, but rather excited and hopeful! Rachel Macy Stafford's gentle tone, personal reflections, and easy-to-embrace habits inspired and encouraged me, so much so that I found myself instantly---and naturally---incorporating her insights and ideas into my day. *Hands Free Life* is simply a must-read if you want to be lovingly guided toward filling your days with more meaningful and enjoyable moments. (Sheila McCraith, author of *Yell Less, Love More*) In today's distraction-filled culture, it's tempting to fill our days with "busy-ness" to feel like we're accomplishing something, while the reality is we're just moving farther and farther from the kind of authentic life we want to create. Rachel Macy Stafford's new book, *Hands Free Life* is the antidote to the hamster wheel! With compassion and empathy, this "been there, done that" mother teaches readers how to build an authentic and satisfying life that matters. (Meagan Francis, author of *The Happiest Mom*) With a refreshing focus on less pressure, more love, *Hands Free Life* beckons us to a life that cherishes the individuality of each family member and the transformative power of presence. This book is about less pressure, more love; less comparison, more perspective; less distraction, and more life! (Anna Whiston-Donaldson, New York Times bestselling author of *Rare Bird*) *Hands Free Life* is such an important book! One of the biggest challenges most of us face in today's digitally connected, fast-paced world is how to disengage from technology and connect to the things and people that matter most. Rachel Macy Stafford's powerful and down-to-earth advice helps us live with more presence, awareness, and perspective. (Mike Robbins, author of *Nothing Changes Until You Do*) This book expresses what an amazing time we can have within the family dynamic when we learn to let go of the excessive demands we find ourselves in. It allows us to become aware of the

way we self-talk about our parenting while promoting how to live life to its fullest in harmony. Rachel has so eloquently shared what it takes to “keep track of life” and how it impacts our relationships with those we love. (Lisa Hein, international bestselling author and motivational speaker) Hands Free Life is a heartwarming book by a talented writer who lifts you up with inspiration and plants your feet squarely on the ground, ready to focus on what really matters. (Sandra R. Blackard, author of Say What You See® for Parents and Teachers)

Rachel Macy Stafford is a New York Times bestselling author and a certified special education teacher with a Master’s Degree in education. A few years ago, this life-long writer felt compelled to share her journey to let go of distraction and grasp what really matters by creating what became the tremendously popular blog “Hands Free Mama.” Using her skills as a writer, teacher, and encourager, Rachel provides readers with simple, non-intimidating, and motivating methods to let go of distraction and connect with their loved ones. Rachel lives in South with her husband and two children who inspire her daily. [www.handsfreemama.com](http://www.handsfreemama.com)

I looked around at the dusty counter tops, the rugs that needed vacuuming, the dishes yet to be put away. I was on the edge of tears, chastising myself for letting things get so out of control. The temptation to shove everything back and look away from the piles called to me like a sweet love song. But I was tired of the mountains of things around me, fatigued from always running from one duty to the next, exhausted from doing everything but what I felt in my heart was the most important thing; to enjoy my life. My days were frenetic activity, the hours growing shorter and the years left with my children at home flying past me so fast I couldn’t keep up with tearing the months’ pages off the calendar. I wanted to get off this highway. I wanted the side road – the one with the surprise of a fruit stand or a long forgotten picnic table spotted off in the shade of a Weeping Willow. But things felt too deep for me to even think I had a chance at a new life for us. In 2012, I discovered Rachel Macy Stafford online from a friend’s suggestion. Her blog, Hands Free Revolution, has held my hand ever since. Rachel reminds me that no matter how overwhelmed I feel today, I can bring myself peace with rest, direction, and a new chance tomorrow. I can make mistakes and start over. I can learn to love more and I will start with myself. This is why today, I am celebrating the release of Rachel Macy Stafford’s book, Hand Free Life. It’s for anyone who has gone to bed at night, feeling the weight of failure. It’s for all of us who begin our day already feeling defeated. If you are the way I am, then you know what I mean when I say that disappointment in ourselves hurts far more than from anyone else. If you set expectations for yourself that you’d never

set for anyone else. If you're harder on yourself than you would be to a friend. This is the book for you, no matter who you are. It is impossible to walk away unaffected from Rachel's searing truth and invitation, to start over. It's never too late to do life with more love.

If you're looking for deep, meaningful spiritual teaching, save your money and time. But if you enjoy practical, if often rather obvious tips for living your life more mindfully, this is undoubtedly a good read. Filled with personal anecdotes mostly about her children, this is a breezy read that won't cause you to pause and ponder much.

I really enjoyed this book. Some people may not be able to see past the examples and stories Rachel tells about her young kids--this may lead you to think this book is only for parents, but I think everyone could benefit from her ideas about fully engaging in your life. She isn't saying you need to give up your technology, she is just highlighting ways to not let that technology shortchange important areas of your life.

This book was life altering for me. I read it. Then I re-read it. Then I turned off my phone and played with my baby. I mean, I really, really hung out with her. I didn't check Facebook, I didn't scan the news, I didn't read "just one" email. I got down on the floor and I was there. And it meant everything to my sweet, sweet girl. I felt like Ebenezer Scrooge, so incredibly grateful that I hadn't missed it, that it wasn't too late. I keep this book in my purse, just in case I need a kind, nonjudgemental reminder. Get the book. It's a game changer.

This book. Rachel Macy Stafford has a particular gift when it comes to writing about parenting struggles, some of which are age old, and some of which are peculiar to our technologically obsessed times. It feels as though your best girlfriend- the one who LOVES you and you know will tell you the truth- is pointing out what in your heart you already know to be true. We need to slow down. We need to unplug. We need to allow more time for wonder. We need to be less schedule driven. She never lectures, and she is vulnerable about her own struggles raising her girls. I seldom read parenting books because I find myself saying, "I KNOW, I KNOW!!!!" This book made me say, "I know. Oh, me too." I find myself perpetually on the verge of tears, marking pages I want to revisit, making notes- and most importantly, I have stopped several times, put the book down, and sought out one of the kids to hug, or hatch a plan, or NOTICE. This book is a gift.

Picked it up and put it down so many times. I did not read it all, or half for that that matter. The title sounded good so I bought it on Audible as well thinking that I can listen to it while on a long car trip. Same result. Never clicked for me. Sorry...

Through personal stories, Rachel shares ways she has gotten back to what really matters - being present in her life and in the life of her daughters and husband. It is easy to see examples in your own life of the things she mentions in hers, which while initially may be hard to swallow, is encouraging. If she can change and live the life she wants, so can I, so can you. Great advice, great read.

Such a well written and positive book for ANYONE wanting to put family above the noise of life.. and I'm not much of a book person, but can tell you this one is truly easy to read, without making you feel bad about yourself. I could not put it down, felt like my bff was having a real life conversation with just me! Life changing read for the cost of a drive thru lunch.. Go for it, you will not be disappointed, but very encouraged!

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