

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Foreword	11
Introduction	15
A is for Anchor	27
B is for B-R-E-A-T-H-E	33
C is for Comparison, Compliments & Criticism	39
D is for D.I.G. It	48
E is for Envy & Effort	55
F is for Five Seconds	59
G is for Gratitude	63
H is for Habits	71
I is for Imposter	75
J is for Judgment	81
K is for Keep the Blood by the Wound	87
L is for Letting Go	90

M is for Mirror	95
N is for Not My Circus	101
O is for Ordinary	105
P is for Perfection, the Puddle, & Patience	110
Q is for Questions	116
R is for Rewarding Resilience	122
S is for Shut Up, Shirley	127
T is for Time	132
U is for Unlearning	139
V is for Visible	145
W is for Wiggle Your Toes	151
X is for (e)Xternal	155
Y is for Yes	160
Z is for Zigzag	167
Final Thoughts	172

FOREWORD

What an honor it is to write a foreword for one of the most remarkable women I have ever met. The first time I saw Buffi was more than 20 years ago, in a classroom at a language institute in the Netherlands we know as ‘the nuns in Vught’, where I’d signed up for an English course. I was probably so nervous that I was sick in bed for two of the five days. But on the other days, she was my bright spot, although she didn’t know it then. Her energy, her lightness, and her cheerfulness all filled the classroom with good vibes. Looking back on it, I think the reason I went there was more to meet her than to improve my English.

A year later I approached her about an English-speaking role in a film (that was never released) and since then it’s been ‘on’. Not that we saw a lot of each other – we still sometimes don’t see each other for a long time – but when we do see each other, there’s a deep connection

right away, with an intimacy and warmth that is so much her own. And she's so her own person. She's just ...Buffi. Smart, sweet and and super funny! But what's maybe the most distinctive thing about her is her positivity. She doesn't know this either, but at several points in my life when things weren't going well, there was Buffi. With a text or a voice message. And every time it happened, I had to laugh, and she warmed my heart. Once again, she'd made my life lighter, the way she likes to do for the people she loves. Because that's what it's become, that's what we've become, friends who are in each other's hearts, and always will be.

But now let's get to this new book. I'm so happy that she wants to share her insights with us. And her tips! Because believe me, you want those tips. After just a couple of pages, I thought 'everybody has to read this.' Young, old, it doesn't matter, because they can help every one of us. It's therapy in a light-hearted format, but it's really important stuff. Lessons I wish I'd learned much earlier, words of wisdom that will really make you happier. There's no pointing fingers, nobody wants that, no... it's Buffi style. Breezy, intelligent and so true!

Buffi asked me to write the foreword because she thinks I have such a positive attitude to life. And it's true, although I've been through enough, I can always see the

bright side and see what is there, what I can still enjoy. But could I fill a book with it? No. But no worries, Buffi's done it. *You Are the Best Thing That's Ever Happened to You* is a must-read as far as I'm concerned. In these complicated and sometimes very tragic times, it's exactly what we need. Living lighter and brighter.

Take it in, digest it, put it into practice and fill yourself to the brim with the energy of a miraculous mix of happiness and joy!

13

The sparkle she brings, I hope you'll feel it too. If not... open up and you will be blown away!!

Buffi, you stole my heart and I'm happy you have it. And you know you've got mine too.

Love,
Isa Hoes

INTRODUCTION

I wrote this book to remind you of something you might have forgotten.

You. Are. Here.

You are here, and you have value.

You are unique, and deserve to take up space in the world.

You being on this planet is nothing short of a miracle. Don't believe me? Let's check in with someone much smarter than me.

The probability of you existing right now, on this planet, according to Dr. Ali Binazir, is **1 in $10^{2,685,000}$** . For those of you who, like me, have never sampled a slice of Scientific Notation Pie, let me keep it simple. The first number is 1. That's you. You're number 1. Yeah! Ok, good so far. That second number is a 10. And then the fun starts. It's 1 in 10 to the Really Big Number power. And that Really Big Number has almost 2.7 million zeros. Wow.

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Ok. That's a lot of zeros.
But we are nowhere near done.
Now take that number of zeros, my darling, and **multiply it by 2,685**. The chances of you being here is so indescribably small... it's the closest you can get to zero without it being zero.

You are proof that miracles exist.

To put it another way, think of it like this:
You being alive today is just about the same probability

of 2 million people getting together and playing a game of dice. Fun, right? But the dice... have a **trillion** sides. Everyone, all 2 million people, roll the dice at the same time, and they all come up with the **exact same number**.

Now my mind is officially blown.

I mean...can you even imagine the odds of you being on this planet, right here, right now?

Wow. Just wow.

18

Your existence required the unbroken stretch of survival and reproduction of *all* your ancestors, every single one, including Knucklewalker Kenny and Cavewoman Carrie, reaching back 4 billion years.

You are 1 in 10^{2,685,000}.

You, my dear, literally so much more than one in a million, my dear. You're one in...well...a LOT.

Now, let's contrast these odds with another highly scientific set of numbers.

After years of conducting highly extensive research, experts around the world have discovered that the odds of you dying are determined to be precisely...*frowning and squinting*...

1 in 1.

That really puts things into perspective.

You are here once, and never for long enough.

(We will deal with reincarnation at another time.)

And, because you are lucky enough to be HERE, right now, and be YOU, you are already fantastic just as you are. You won the lottery when you were born. You've already beat those incredible odds. Just by showing up.

19

But so many people forget that.

That's why I wrote this book.

My book is a love letter to you.

Full of lovely letters.

26 of them, to be exact.

To remind you of a few things that might have slipped away over time.

You are worthy.

You deserve to be treated with kindness.

You deserve to treat YOURSELF with compassion.

But... are you doing just that?

Are you showing yourself the grace that you bestow so naturally to others?

Treating yourself as well as you would a stranger that asks you for help?

Being patient and kind, just like you are to your family, friends, and colleagues?

Or are you constantly judging, criticizing, and talking smack about yourself... to yourself?

Honey, listen.

You might have forgotten how awesome you are.

Or maybe you never even knew this in the first place.

20

It doesn't matter.

You're here. Right now.

And you have a story to tell, a purpose to share, and a whole glorious life to live.

You have a message hiding inside you.

It has meaning.

Value.

It's there.

It's been there for a long time, waiting to be discovered.

And shared.

Shamelessly.

Without apology.

Without comparison.

Trust me.

I've learned something in my 30+ years of English communication coaching.

And that's this: