

TERRI SAVELLE FOY



# the *Alone* advantage

10  
Behind-the-  
Scenes Habits  
That Drive  
Crazy  
Success

TWO CHAPTER SAMPLER

# the *Alone* advantage



**10 Behind-the-Scenes Habits  
That Drive Crazy Success**

**TERRI SAVELLE FOY**



**EMANATE**  
BOOKS

*The Alone Advantage*

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## CHAPTER 1

# Hear the Music

### DON'T MISS THE MUSIC

Make time to be alone. Your best ideas live within solitude.

—ROBIN SHARMA

There was a man in a pair of jeans, a plain T-shirt, and sneakers playing the violin during rush hour in the middle of an underground metro station in Washington, DC. A hidden camera was set up to watch how the thousands of pedestrians reacted to his concert. The musician played six incredible pieces by Bach. One person paused to listen while another tossed money to him. Some threw quarters, dimes, and pennies.

Children seemed to be the most interested in his performance. *The Washington Post* reported, “Every single time a child walked past, he or she tried to stop and watch and every time, a parent scooted the kid away.”<sup>1</sup> During the forty-five minutes he played, only six listeners paused their commute to hear his music. Many passersby by spoke loudly on their cell phones so they could be heard over the noise of the violinist.

When he finally stopped playing that day, no one noticed and no one applauded. There was complete silence. Only two days before this, the vagabond-looking violinist had a sold-out performance in Boston where the ticket price averaged one hundred dollars. But nobody in the metro knew that the man was Joshua Bell, the world-famous

violinist, playing one of the most difficult pieces composed for the violin, Bach's Partita No. 2, on an \$8.5 million Stradivarius violin!<sup>2</sup>

What will we miss in life if we're so focused and busy we don't notice or stop to enjoy when one of the world's best musicians plays one of the world's most difficult pieces?

Getting away from all the distractions vying for your attention and just listening will be the most challenging and rewarding thing you will ever do to discover your purpose. It is truly the greatest private habit of the most successful people in the world. They make time to stop and listen.

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Most of us avoid immersing ourselves in solitude, like I did, because it's where we uncover everything.

The market is always fighting for your undivided attention. The average person spends their day with so much noise. We get on Instagram before we get out of bed. We turn on our playlist as we turn on the coffeepot. We chat at the watercooler. We return home and check out who got engaged after the rose ceremony while simultaneously checking Facebook—until it's time to go to bed and start the process again the next morning. We spend most of our time listening to others' voices and rarely our own, much less the voice of God.

The thought of spending time alone without checking YouTube or having Netflix on in the background can feel like torture. Some people would rather be physically harmed than sit alone quietly in a room for twenty minutes to think.

Bob Beaudine said, "Once you meet with God, you'll discover something amazing. You'll find out He does more than just listen to you; He has a plan—plans to prosper you, give you hope, and always shed light on your great future. But to know these plans you have to stop and listen."<sup>3</sup>

When you look at the great geniuses the world has known, they all have one thing in common: they spend a lot of time alone thinking. In the Bible most people got their vision out in the hills, the deserts, the wilderness, in the quiet place of solitude. Jesus spent time alone. Paul spent time alone. Moses spent time alone. Alone is where you receive direction, clarity, answers, wisdom, and confidence.

I heard someone say there are two reasons we find it agonizing to spend time alone: either we get bored easily, or we want to avoid the reality of where our life has ended up. I was the latter. I didn't want to be honest with myself or with God about how confused I was or how disappointed I felt with where I had landed in life (because of my own choices). But being alone proved to be the absolute best thing that could have ever happened to me.

You might be asking, "But what do I do when I'm alone?" Let me point out that you will need two items that will prove to be the greatest tools on your road to success. A journal and a pen.

"But Jesus Himself would often slip away to the wilderness and pray [in seclusion]" (Luke 5:16 AMP).

. . .

I'll never forget that first morning in 2002 when I began the "forced" habit of aloneness at the direction of my boss. After dropping off my daughter at school, I drove home, walked into my kitchen, lit a green-tea-scented candle (I can almost smell it today), grabbed an empty journal and a blue pen, and plopped myself on the sofa. I set a timer for twenty minutes, which sounded like an eternity, and just sat there. The stillness of the room was frightening. It annoyed me greatly to not have noise in the background—not the TV, music, someone on the phone, the neighbor mowing their lawn, the garbage truck collecting bins, birds chirping—seriously nothing other than quietness.

I had never practiced the art of doing nothing.

It felt like time was being stretched.

I couldn't remember the last moment I'd truly sat down and listened for that still, small voice.

I stared at the blank page of that journal and began writing my thoughts. I was shocked. The more I wrote, the more sincere and honest I was about my feelings.

*Why is my marriage falling apart?*

*What led me to making poor decisions that resulted in this miserable state of mind?*

*Why am I so angry?*

*Why do I hide my feelings even from those I love the most?*

*Why am I so insecure and inferior?*

*How did I slide into this exhausting rut?*

*What do I really want to do with my life?*

The more I penned my thoughts in the following days, the deeper I dove into my reality. I found so much healing on the pages of those journals. I wrote out scriptures that brought peace to my tormented mind. I became aware of people I needed to forgive and saw how my weaknesses were overpowering my strengths. I came face-to-face with the truth that I had never really given myself permission to dream. I realized that my insecurities stemmed from not ever thinking I was enough.

We need these consistent times in solitude. It's almost like self-therapy. It's where introspection happens as you become more aware of . . . you. It's almost as if you become your own counselor when you get honest with your deepest thoughts.

Many people say, "Don't just sit there, *do something!*" I always say, "Don't just do something, *sit there*—and listen. And *then* write in your journal."

How good are you at being alone? How often do you hear nothing?

When was the last time you sat quietly by yourself and just thought? *About what, Terri?* Life. Your future. Where you are headed. Where you see yourself five years from now. What you really want. What you want to change. What's bothering you. Who you need to forgive. What you need to stop doing. What you need to pursue. What God is speaking to your heart.

Perhaps, like me years ago, you haven't been still long enough to ask yourself those vital questions and—more importantly—to obtain answers, because you're never alone. Maybe you even pray, like I did every morning, but you never listen for God to communicate back to you.


## Make Time to Think

Carmine Gallo described what happened when “one day in 1966, two men met for drinks at the hotel's bar. One was a Texas businessman; the other a chain-smoking, whiskey-swiggling lawyer.”<sup>4</sup> Herb Kelleher and Rollin King met that day to discuss business ideas they'd been entertaining. On this particular day, they sat at the table and thought about their future and the ideas rolling around in their heads. What did they want to do, to create, to start? One of them picked up a cocktail napkin, flipped it over, and drew a triangle. “At the top of the triangle they wrote ‘Dallas,’ on the bottom left ‘San Antonio,’ and on the bottom right ‘Houston.’ Their vision was simple—to create a small, local airline connecting three Texas cities.”


That business plan that they sat there quietly thinking about, sketched on the back of a hotel napkin, would wind up impacting the lives of millions of Americans. On March 15,

Thinking is the  
hardest work  
there is, which  
is the probable  
reason why so  
few engage in it.  
—HENRY FORD



  
*Thought* is the original source of all wealth, all success, all material gain, all great discoveries and inventions and all achievement.

—CLAUDE M. BRISTOL

  
more than 100 million passengers a year, and generating billions of dollars of quarterly profit.”<sup>5</sup> Makes me want to pick up a napkin and start drawing!

1967, Herb and Rollin established Southwest Airlines. And I love that the original napkin is framed in the Dallas headquarters. “Southwest is the world’s largest airline, employing 46,000 people, carrying

. . .

The chairman of Chick-fil-A, Dan Cathy, has reported spending half a day every two weeks and one solid day each month alone to think. He allocates fifteen to twenty minutes to solitude before starting each day.<sup>6</sup>



One synonym for *think* is *meditate*. For some people, *meditate* is a bad word because they associate it with New Age religions. There are many types of meditation, but I’m referring to it in the context of a believer’s devotional life. The Bible uses the word *meditate* eighteen times in the New International Version.<sup>7</sup> God wants you to meditate. He even explains that meditation is a part of your journey to success: “Keep this Book of the Law always on your lips; meditate on it day and night, so that you may be careful to do everything written in it. Then you will be prosperous and successful” (Joshua 1:8).

Meditation is a critical aspect of prayer. Prayer is you talking; meditation is you listening! Most people never meditate—I didn’t. I did all the talking when I prayed. Most people tell the Lord what’s on their hearts, plead for things, and then prayer is over. Your dream is

never revealed to you while you're talking. You must be quiet and just listen. You'll be amazed how loudly God speaks.

God wants to give you the healing, the wisdom, the direction you so desperately desire. He wants to reveal His next steps for your life and even give you those God-inspired ideas that produce great wealth. He wants to whisper insights and creative concepts, but you must get quiet to hear them.

Many successful people are committed to having meditation time every single day. They don't fear solitude; they embrace it. They schedule alone time. It's their moment to reflect, to recoup, to replenish their energy and to relate with the Lord.

—  
“Call to me and I  
will answer you, and  
show you great and  
unsearchable things.”  
—JEREMIAH 33:3  
—

Just imagine what a simple twenty-minute habit of listening could produce in your life. After a month, that's ten hours that could lead to potentially hearing God-inspired ideas that produce a wealth of income, knowing which person to marry without hesitation, which deal to close without doubt, which project to launch without confusion. Imagine providing solutions for your company that bring significant promotion. Imagine being in the right places at the right times to make the right connections—all from a simple twenty-minute routine. This is why successful people spend time alone. There's great insight in isolation.

Michael Todd, author of *Crazy Faith*, wrote, “When you pray, withdraw. Even Jesus, the Son of God, had to intentionally get away from the noise.”<sup>8</sup> It's time to stop, hear the music in your heart, and write.

## CHAPTER 2

# 5 Things Successful People Write in Their Journals

A life worth living is a life worth recording.

—JIM ROHN

Years ago I received a letter from a sweet lady who heard I was speaking at a church near her home in Tyler, Texas. She was in a season where she was just stuck. She had lost hope and vision for her life and didn't have any goals to pursue. Every day felt like a vicious cycle of lather, rinse, and repeat. And she was miserable.

She felt like she was supposed to come to hear me speak, but she talked herself out of it. She was feeling down and didn't want to drive by herself, so she stayed home. But she knew she was still supposed to hear the message and ended up watching the conference online.

This woman heard me talk about the importance of keeping a journal, so she bought one and started writing. God began to remind her of dreams she'd forgotten. But she thought those dreams were hopeless. It was too late. She had wasted too much time. Those were her thoughts, however, not God's.

One of her dreams was going back to school to become a nurse. Each morning as she spent time alone in prayer, her vision came alive in her, and at thirty-two years old she made a change! She went back

to school, earned her degree, got her nursing certificate, and is now a full-time hospice nurse and loves her life.

Jim Rohn, who was a strong advocate for journaling, said, “If you’re serious about becoming a wealthy, powerful, sophisticated, healthy, influential, cultured and a unique individual—keep a journal.”<sup>1</sup> The reason that Rohn believed in the importance of writing things down is simply because you’ll forget. You can’t trust your memory. When you hear something valuable, write it down. When you stumble across something important, meaningful, or inspiring, write it down. When you feel like God is speaking to you in prayer, write it down. When you need clarity and direction for your life, write it down.


Let’s look at five of the most powerful reasons to keep a journal.

## 1. Record Your Ideas


Many of us have experienced thinking of a great idea but before we considered writing it down, it was gone. In the business world, success coaches advise their clients to capture their thoughts and ideas in writing as soon as possible. Research indicates that any new ideas not captured *within thirty-seven seconds* are likely never to be recalled. *In seven minutes*, the ideas are gone forever!<sup>2</sup>

Singer and designer Jessica Simpson has used her journal for songwriting ideas. She once said, “It is very, very therapeutic. There is a lot about heartbreak, there is a lot about perseverance. I used it as inspiration for my album. I used certain journal excerpts from certain journal entries. It has been an awesome experience for me.”<sup>3</sup>

Ideas are all around you. Creative ideas will come to you at the



You can use the power of pen and paper to strategize and create anything you want.  
—STACIA PIERCE




most random times. Documenting these ideas in your journal could provide a solution or a breakthrough. Putting your ideas on paper ensures you have them recorded and you can start developing plans to put into action.


## 2. Identify Your Thoughts

Writing in a journal can help you express your thoughts. It becomes a tool for self-improvement. You truly get to know yourself more when you pinpoint your thoughts and feelings in writing. You'll be able to identify what is holding you back, what you're struggling to overcome, and the reasons behind your decisions.

Your private journal is a safe space where you can be honest with yourself. It's important you don't write with the intent of someone reading it. When I was in college I always kept a journal. When I did something I wasn't proud of, I would write in French. I knew nobody else in Lubbock, Texas, spoke French, so I could never be found out!



Success is  
determined not so  
much by the size of  
one's brain as it is  
by the size of one's  
thinking.  
—DAVID SCHWARTZ



Your journal is very intimate, and you can reveal yourself with no restraints about who you really are and what you truly want.

Keeping a journal literally empties your brain of all the thoughts going through your head at any given time. When you need to make big decisions for your life such as where to move, which job to take, who to

marry, where to apply, when to open your business, which university to attend, which offer to accept, just getting your thoughts out of your head and onto paper will help you make better decisions. Journaling has been shown to improve emotional health, mental health, and even reduce stress, which improves your physical health.

Actor Joseph Gordon-Levitt said, “I like to write. I’ve gone through different phases in my life of writing in a journal more or less frequently, but it’s something I turn to, especially when I’m trying to work through something that’s vexing me.” He also said that journaling helps lead him to new answers or conclusions.<sup>4</sup>

### 3. Find Clarity

Clarity comes from questions. When you sit quietly and begin asking yourself tough questions, you will gain understanding as you write your responses to these uncertainties. I love what Gary Keller said: “You may be asking, ‘Why focus on a question when what we really crave is an answer?’ It’s simple. Answers come from questions, and the quality of any answer is directly determined by the quality of the question.”<sup>5</sup>

A few years ago I felt uneasy inside. I was stressed out, overworked, and feeling miserable with my current schedule. Finally, I sat quietly with my journal and began asking myself specific questions concerning my state of mind.

As I focused on answering each inquiry, I was able to identify my solution. Each curious sentence compelled me to dig deeper and find the answer, which pointed me in an entirely new direction. Had I not journaled that experience, I would still be running in circles wondering why.

If you lack clarity and direction in some aspect of your life, if you feel stuck in a certain season, if you’re going through a major transition or feeling great stress in your current situation, ask yourself these questions and then write out your answers:

- What advice would you give to someone in your situation?
- What do you want to do?

- What would make the situation better?
- What actions do you need to take to change things?
- What are you doing wrong?
- What are you doing right?

With distractions all around, the best thing you can do is schedule time to be alone, get out your journal, and ask yourself questions: “Writing about challenging experiences can also help you process them in a constructive way, making it easier to handle difficult emotions. By engaging with your thoughts and feelings in this way, journaling can be a powerful tool for developing self-awareness and enhancing your mental health.”<sup>6</sup>

If you’re hazy about an issue in your life, write it out. This will help you make tough decisions. Instead of keeping those thoughts going around in circles in your head, pen them on paper. Start listing the consequences of each decision. What are the pros and cons? List every possible outcome of the choice you need to make.

## 4. Plan Your Future

This is where I began getting honest with myself about my future. I’ll explain much more about this vital habit in part 5. As you sit quietly and create your ideal life on paper, it is like programming your GPS in your car—you’ve given yourself a clear map to follow.

You may have seen the famous TED talk “Living Beyond Limits,”<sup>7</sup> but if you haven’t, let me tell you the story about a girl named Amy Purdy. At nineteen, she was working as a massage therapist, healthy, and active in snowboarding. One day Amy thought she had the flu, just like anybody would who has a low fever and body aches. But she got sicker and sicker as the hours passed until a cousin rushed her to the hospital.

It was nearly too late, as the doctors gave her only a 2 percent chance of survival from what was eventually diagnosed as bacterial meningitis. She was put on life support as her organs shut down, her body experiencing septic shock. But, by the grace of God, “the doctors were able to perform emergency surgery and saved Amy’s life. Her legs, however, had to be amputated below the knees a few weeks later.”<sup>8</sup>

After an intense recovery, Amy told Carmine Gallo for his book *The Storyteller’s Secret*,

My darkest days were when I went home and had to walk in these metal legs for the first time. I had to rethink the rest of my life. I felt so out of control. I was at the bottom of the barrel. I was sick and tired of being sick and tired. That’s when this question popped into my head: *If my life were a book and I was the author, how would I want the story to go?*

I knew what I didn’t want. I didn’t want people to feel sorry for me. I didn’t want people to see me as disabled. I wanted to live a life of adventure and stories. This question allowed me to daydream; daydream about traveling the world, daydream about snowboarding, daydream about all the things I wanted to do and completely believing that it was possible.<sup>9</sup>

And that’s exactly what Amy has proven. She won the bronze medal in snowboarding at the 2014 Paralympic Games, then became a finalist on *Dancing with the Stars*. And millions of people have watched her incredibly inspiring TED talk.

When was the last time you sat quietly and just thought about your vision, dream, and purpose? You don’t have to do this only when something tragic or life-altering happens, though for most of us that’s when we come to grips with life. Our future. Our choices. The direction our lives are going.



Think about Amy's story. And never underestimate the power of a blank book. Just like any habit, the more you practice it, the more comfortable you get doing it. It will become something you desire doing because you realize the impact it has on every aspect of your life.

Your journal is your personal space to ponder and pen your aspirations. The pages inside become your road map for success.

## 5. Hear from the Lord in Prayer

“Write all the words I have spoken to you in a book” (Jeremiah 30:2 NRSV). Starting your day in prayer sets the tone for the day. We can have devotions, go to church, and listen to messages, but nothing replaces hearing from God.

*But Terri, how do you know if it's God?* Practice. In 2002 I wasn't sure if it was God, but I practiced writing down whatever I heard. It's no different than when your best friend calls on the phone when you have caller ID blocked. You probably don't have to ask, “Who is this?” No, you recognize your friend's voice because you have practice hearing it. It's the same with God.

“Thus says the Lord God of Israel: ‘Write in a book all the words which I have spoken to you’ (Jeremiah 30:2 AMP). God instructed Jeremiah to write down His words to His people. Why? Again, because we forget. We also can write down our conversations with God so we don't forget. Warning: If you've never journaled your thoughts before or practiced hearing from the Lord, you will have to fight the doubts in your head telling you that God speaks only to ministers but not to you. Those doubts are lies. God wants you to hear His voice more than anything.

Don't overthink your writing. Don't allow doubt to stop you from writing what you hear inside. Just write whatever is on your mind. The

words are not intended to be a polished article. They're your thoughts and your impressions from the Lord.

A friend of mine told me a true story about a lady sitting in church one Sunday morning. Suddenly she felt the Lord tell her to pledge \$1,000 for their outreaches and to send it within thirty days. She was a single mom and did not have an extra \$1,000 to donate. She sat there thinking, *God, where am I going to get that kind of money and that quickly?* But she wrote down her pledge and put it in the offering.


While she was spending time alone in prayer, God reminded her of something she had forgotten. The previous Christmas, when she didn't have the money to buy presents for her family and friends, she got creative. She handmade beautiful barrettes and hairbows and gave them as gifts. Her friends loved them. Remembering this, she thought, *I'll make some more.*

Next she was reminded of a friend who owned a boutique. *I wonder if she would allow me to sell some of my creations at her store.* She made a phone call, and the boutique owner said, "Sure, you can set up a booth this weekend."

The next Saturday morning, she was sitting there displaying her product, selling hairbows and barrettes one at a time, until one customer picked up a certain style, flipped it over, flipped it back, and examined it thoroughly. The customer put it down, picked up another one, and did the same. Over and over, one after another, she continued this routine. Finally, she asked if they were handmade and was assured they were. The curious inspector said, "Great. I'll take fifty thousand." She was a buyer for Nordstrom department store!

God-inspired ideas in prayer can change your destiny.


The Bible says His "sheep follow him because they know his




I will instruct you  
and teach you in the  
way you should go;  
I will counsel you  
with my loving eye  
on you.

—PSALM 32:8



  
Be still and know  
that I am God.  
—PSALM 46:10

voice” (John 10:4). God expects you to hear from Him. It’s not strange. It’s not mystical. It’s not creepy. It’s quite the opposite. It provides clarity, confidence, peace, comfort, direction, wisdom, and ideas for your life.

  
Admittedly, I’ve never heard an audible voice in prayer. What I’ve heard is more like an impression on the inside. My dad always said, “Whatever comes up in your spirit, just write it down.”

During these consistent, scheduled times alone with the Lord, I’ve received the direction to start a ministry, to organize mission trips to France, to launch a women’s conference, and even to name the conference ICING. It’s in these times of solitude that I’ve overcome deep-rooted insecurities and built up my self-image enough to be able to stand on stages in front of thousands of people. It’s behind closed doors with nobody around where I’ve given myself permission to dream up where I want to be tomorrow. It’s in isolation where I mustered up the strength of character to forgive my husband and forgive myself and see my marriage completely restored.

It all begins, and continues to this day, in my quiet times alone with a journal and a pen.