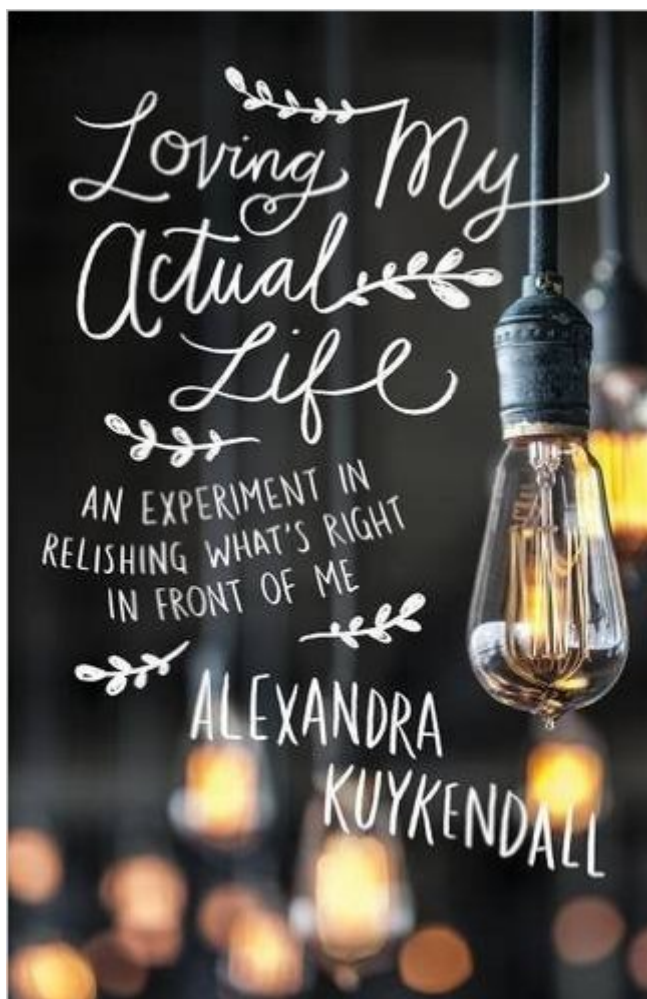


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# Loving My Actual Life: An Experiment In Relishing What's Right In Front Of Me



## Synopsis

Feel Satisfied with Who and Where You Are In a world of comparison and discontent, it can feel impossible to be happy with life as we know it. Other people seem to have it all together, to be finding success, to be having more fun. But we weren't meant for a life characterized by dissatisfaction. In this entertaining and relatable book, Alexandra Kuykendall chronicles her nine-month experiment to rekindle her love of her ordinary "actual" life. After wiping her calendar as clean as a mother of four can, Kuykendall focuses on one aspect of her life each month, searching for ways to more fully enjoy her current season. By intentionally adding one thing each month that will make her jump for joy, she provides a practical challenge women can easily replicate. With humor, poignancy, and plenty of personal stories, Kuykendall weaves together spiritual themes and practical application into a holy self-awareness, showing women how a few small changes in their routines can improve their enjoyment of this crazy-busy life. Endorsement "If you ever get the chance to read anything written by Alexandra Kuykendall, take it. She is a gentle, trustworthy storyteller who lives the words she writes about." --Emily P. Freeman, author of *Simply Tuesday*

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

For a while now, it feels like I've been in survival mode, holding my breath until this difficult phase of life ends. When the baby sleeps more and the kids are more independent, then I'll be able to take care of me again. Then, I'll enjoy my life again. Alexandra Kuykendall's book reminded me that there are gifts to be appreciated today, in my actual chaotic life. I was missing them, missing the

beauty, missing opportunities because my focus was on the endless needs of my little ones and my household. Inspired by her experiment, I've been making small changes on a practical level as well. I had thought that I was doing as much as I could under the circumstances. However, I'm seeing now that if I tweak certain habits, even small ones, it can have a significant impact on my mood and stress levels. I'm planning to continue my own experiment, because why wouldn't I want to learn to love the life I've been given. I'm so grateful for Kuykendall's authentic sharing of her journey. She is both a normalizing voice and an inspiring one.

Like the subtitle says, this is a book about "relishing what's right in front of us." The author spends nine months focusing on a different area of her life each month that needs improvement. She covers topics including: quiet, mornings, dates, health, adventure, home organization, creativity, meals, and passions. Each chapter covers a month and a topic, and Alexandra Kuykendall journals about a paragraph for most days. Then at the end of the chapter, she sums up what she learned that month and has questions to ponder and a Bible verse to memorize. This book reminded me of Jen Hatmaker's *7: an Experimental Mutiny Against Excess*, except that it wasn't as funny or thought provoking. I guess the book was very basic, everyday. And I think that her point was that our lives are often very basic, but we can still "love our actual life." I guess I just like to read to be inspired to reach beyond the everyday. You can't just read a book about a woman's experiences if you want to change; you have to walk your own path to learn these things. And she does encourage women to follow in her footsteps by including lists in the back of the book. She writes tips on how to implement the ideas she talked about. For instance, she has ten ways to find quiet during the day. I would probably recommend this to encourage a working mom since she does talk a lot about balancing work and kids and sports. I received this book for free in exchange for an honest review.

I've ordered a hard copy to have to loan, and ordered another copy to be sent to a friend. Yes, it's that important of a book. Alexandra is a busy, BUSY mom. But don't let that stop you from reading her book! :) Even if you've NEVER been a mom, you'll get something from this one - I was convicted several times, and it's already changed my thinking about some things I do or don't do. This is a very readable book. I really like Alexandra's writing style - I feel like she's sitting on the sun porch with me, just sharing her life. And each chapter (you can read the synopsis [HERE!](#)) she ends with "What I Learned" and "Practices I'll Continue", and then "Questions for Reflection", for you to answer. I \*really\* appreciate life application steps! :D

Having no children of my own, I could tend to shy away from an author who is a busy mom of four but while the variables in our lives may be very different the basic challenges we face can tend to be very similar. Alex writes in a fresh way that so many women can relate to. I appreciate her transparency regarding the imperfections and stumbles that are a part of our actual lives. You'll enjoy this book!

This book was only okay. I was wanting a deeper book that looked at why I should love the life (roles) I am in right now. She is writing from a Christian stay-at-home-mom perspective and appeal will be to this crowd mainly. She tried to follow the format that Jen Hatmaker did when she wrote the book, *Seven*, but with a different premise. There was a challenge to focus on one part of her life that she wasn't loving fully, she usually made a significant change to something in that month, and then journaled about it along the way. That is the whole of the book. The problem I had with it is that she wasn't actually loving her life - she was changing little things so that she could love it more. And it was fairly superficial and not theologically challenging. So if that is where you are exactly in your life and need a book like this, it will be great. If not, it's just "eh".

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