

# The Edge of Greatness

JONI WOELFEL



**Resurrection Press**  
An Imprint of  
**CATHOLIC BOOK PUBLISHING CO.**  
Totowa • New Jersey

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## Preface: Mentors in Hope

FROM birth to death, we are on a spiraling journey to come into the fullness of our true selves. Our relationships and life experiences are our teachers as we evolve, transform, resurrect and integrate the precious facets that make us who we are.

We are not meant to come into this fullness alone. Coming into our true selves requires earnest willingness to process our challenges remembering that only what we bring to the light and acknowledge can be healed. As we embrace our hidden and disinherited voices, we own our shortcomings and life's hurts—and the power comes.

This abiding, magnificent, glorious power is the birthright of every human being. Individually and collectively, we stand on the edge of a new consciousness that is holy and authentic, ringing out with clarity in the hearts of all who walk the way of peace, compassion, inclusion and wisdom. What we learn and discover—and in turn give—becomes a sacred offering upon what is the altar of our lives. Through this intimate bond, we find ourselves commissioned as mentors in faith and empowerment.

In her ardent call to humanity Macrina Weiderkehr writes, “If you want to know if you are good for others, ask yourself how much hope you’ve given them. We need so desperately to learn how to hope more completely in all those little bits of life scattered through our days. We need to be so very careful lest we throw someone away because of our lack of hope in their potential, their possibility to be.” As people living on the edge of this pivotal time in history, God is asking us: *How life-giving are you?* And within our desire to reach out to others that question also haunts us about ourselves. “Loving ourselves is the missing link in the divine plan,” Adolfo Quezada writes in his groundbreaking book, *Loving Yourself*

*for God's Sake.* With this thought in mind, we are ushered into a new freedom that elevates us to our highest good and highest potential.

This book represents a sacred offering from the altar of my own life and that of others—in the hopes that it will serve as a companion and guide to men and women from all walks of life who are deeply involved in the journey into fullness of being. Let us walk together in the brilliant light portrayed by the cover artist, echoing May Sarton's poetic words "Now I Become Myself":

All fuses now, falls into place  
From wish to action, word to silence  
My work, my love, my time, my face  
Gathered into one intense  
Gesture of growing like a plant.

With great love and hope, I affirm your call to empowerment.

*Joni Woelfel*

## Part One

# *Living as a Voice*

*A voice says, "Cry out!" And I said, "What should I cry?"*

—Isaiah 40:6



When I dare to be powerful—to use my strength in the service of my vision—then it becomes less and less important that I am afraid.

—Audre Lorde

Do not be afraid of greatness; some are born great, some achieve greatness and others have greatness thrust upon them.

—William Shakespeare

Each time anyone comes into contact with us, they must become different and better people because of having met us. We must radiate God's love. We must know we have been created for greater things.

—Joseph Campbell, *Follow Your Bliss*



## ❖ What Happens When We Say Yes: ❖ Saying Yes

*... every one of God's promises is a "Yes."*

*For this reason . . . we say the "Amen," to the glory of  
God.*

—2 Corinthians 1:20

A NUMBER of years ago, I had an unexpected but valuable experience. It was a day like any other—until I opened the envelope with no return address and unfolded a neatly typed letter that came in that morning's mail. It began with my name misspelled and without a date. It was the first criticism of a column I'd been writing for over a decade.

My hand was shaking slightly by the time I'd read it. The letter writer vehemently disagreed with one of my heroines, who is one of the most respected feminine voices in the Catholic church and the world today, who stands up for spiritual equality for women. This heroine had written me a consoling letter, following the death of our son, and asked me to be a fellow Light Bearer. With tears streaming down my face and into my computer keyboard, I had written her back, "Yes, yes . . . yes."

Distressed, I wrote to a handful of mentors who are well-known writers. One responded, "It seems that when a person has found her heart and voice, it is inevitable that she will not be cheered by everyone. You are now that person! There are those whose "controlled world" will be threatened . . . and whose only way to respond is to judge and condemn. It is true for the person

you wrote about and now it is true for you. If you have the courage to live from your heart here at the edge of a new consciousness where we live today, you will be a challenge to others. Welcome to this uncomfortable place.” Another wrote, “Any letter that is anonymous goes into the trash. Anyone who won’t sign a name is not worthy of your time in reading it.” Still others humorously wrote, “Join the crowd; you must be doing something right. If you can’t take the heat, don’t publish.” And lastly, the shining woman of courage who had been blasted in the letter wrote me, “Congratulations. If we are ever going to do anything of value at this step-over time in history, we are going to have to say first what is not permitted to be said at all . . . *it will be all right. Trust God.*”

What a rite of passage! I took the letter that blasted the heroine and made it into an artistic collage that I proudly display. On it are pasted the encouraging words of the mentors and leaders who advised me. The collage serves to remind me that being a voice and standing up for what we believe is a serious privilege. Knowing where we stand fills us with confidence when dissension comes. I also learned that leaders need affirmation and a sense of kinship when confronting issues.

Becoming a leader and living a life of service is a profound honor and responsibility which takes time and patience. It is amazing what happens to us when we say yes, but it’s even more amazing when we, in turn, can support and invite others to be another voice of hope.

*God Who Knows All the Answers, your guiding words for survival of the soul when we don't know where to turn*