

from the GROUND UP

BUILDING A DREAM HOUSE
—AND A BEAUTIFUL LIFE—
THROUGH GRIT AND GRACE



NOELL JETT

with Melissa Ferguson

...

CREATOR OF

@JETTSETFARMHOUSE

A PDF COMPANION TO THE AUDIOBOOK

From the Ground Up

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Names and identifying characteristics of some individuals have been changed to preserve their privacy.

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Questions to Ask Yourself

Chapter 1: Rich or Poor

1. If you could imagine any life for yourself, what would it be? Write four tangible things you would like to achieve to have a better life.
2. Who is someone you know who is living a life you aspire to? Ask them, “How did you get to the place you are now? What wisdom can you give me?”
3. Think of a time when you failed. What did you learn from that experience? How can you use that lesson to propel you forward instead of letting the failure defeat you?
4. Do you feel you are working hard but getting nowhere? How can you work smarter, not harder?

Chapter 2: When the Going Gets Rough

1. How have unhealthy religious experiences affected your relationship with God? With others? With the way you see yourself?
2. When have you had a low moment and felt like giving up, but didn't? What gave you the strength to press on?
3. Have you ever been told that you were not enough based on your gender alone? That you didn't have the freedom to pursue things because of your race, gender, religion, or something else? How did you handle those situations?

Chapter 3: Finding Relief in the Midst of Discouragement

Check the boxes of any of these you can answer yes to:

- ☐ Do you live on an emotional roller coaster, where one day you can take on the world and the next you feel like you can't get out of bed?
- ☐ Have you ever felt so low you've contemplated taking serious action against yourself?
- ☐ Do you ever struggle with seeing only the negative in life? Wondering why you can't get out of your slump?
- ☐ Has anyone in your family tree had depression or symptoms of depression?
- ☐ Do you have everything—the home, the finances, the stability, the goals—and still feel empty? Still wonder, “What's the point of it all? Why am I not happy?”

If you checked any of these boxes, take a few minutes to look up a mental health professional in your area. You don't have to call yet. Just peruse their website. Read reviews. Do your research. And if you are willing, consider taking the next step and making the call. You just might look back on this moment as the one that turned your life around.

Chapter 4: Learn on the Job

1. For Daniel and me, success in our career path means financial stability, doing our passion, and having freedom with our time. List three to five things that characterize a successful career to you. Looking at the list you made, does your current occupation fulfill your goals?

2. Do you ever feel like you are less valuable because you missed out on a college degree or other traditional achievement?
3. If you are hoping for a new career, can you gain this career without schooling? Are there alternative programs you can take advantage of?
4. Is there an expert in that field whom you can shadow?

Chapter 5: Instagram: Where It All Began

1. What three topics could you talk about for hours on end?
2. Which of those topics gives you the most joy?
3. If you were to start using social media as a means of business, what would be your end goal?
4. What are your strengths? Are you funny? Do you teach well? What social media platform best corresponds to those strengths?
5. How well do you handle criticism? How can you guard your heart when people on social media try to hurt you?

Chapter 6: Beauty on the Inside

1. Have you ever experienced someone treating you differently once your looks or things you owned looked more culturally appealing or high-end? Have you experienced the opposite? How did you handle the situation?
2. Has there ever been an instance when you judged someone else, even without meaning to, based on things they owned or the way they looked? If yes, why?
3. How can you guard your children's hearts and minds so they aren't deeply hurt by the judgment of outsiders? How do you teach them to love themselves?

4. Have you ever thought, *If only I had _____, I'd be happy*, and then once you got it, instead of being content you just wanted something else? How do you battle discontentment?

Chapter 7: Dust Yourself Off After Rejection

1. Write down a time when you said (or thought) something negative about somebody else—whether to their face or behind their back. Why did you say it? Were you dealing with something in your own life that could be directly related to the way you thought or responded to the situation?
2. Write down a time you were senselessly hurt by somebody else out of the blue. Why do you think they did it? What indicators in their life could have hinted that something was wrong?
3. After facing the above rejection, did you fear that everyone else thought and felt the same way about you? How did you or can you overcome it?
4. Is it easy for you to let conflict go without closure? What can you do next time you're in a similar situation that will make it easier for you to move forward in peace?
5. Think of the last three conversations you had with someone in your family, someone outside your family, and someone at work. Was each a pleasant conversation? In one word, how would you describe the overall vibe of each conversation? Now put that label on yourself and ask, *Is this who I want to be known as? A _____ person?*

Chapter 8: Finding Happiness in the Midst of Uncertainty

1. How important to you is having a sense of control? Are you the type of person who makes a ten-year plan for your life? If so, how do you react when your plans go off the rails?
2. What can you control in your life? List five things you can control and five things you can't. How do you feel about the things you can't control?
3. List one hundred things you are grateful for, as significant as your eyesight and as small as the coffee mug in your cupboard. Keep that list close for moments when you feel discouraged.
4. Has there been a time when something bad happened and you couldn't understand the reason, only to discover years later that a positive thing came directly from the experience? A key way your character was shaped or perhaps something that led to that dream job?
5. Who is someone you have seen generally contented through both good times and bad? Consider asking them why they have happiness through thick and thin.

Chapter 9: Accept Help

1. Do you ever admire those who have so many activities on their plate that it sounds impossible for them to actually complete them all? Why?
2. Do you have a hard time accepting help? List several possible reasons why it is difficult.

3. What is the first thing you think about when you wake up in the morning? Do you ever wake up with anxiety about all you have to get done?
4. If someone were to offer to bring a meal to your house after, say, an illness or minor injury, what would you say to them?
5. What is one great thing that could ease the load in your household right now? How can you make that happen?

Chapter 10: Oh, Marriage

1. Do you have a particular couple you look up to? What characteristics are in their relationship that you admire?
2. Do you have too high of expectations for your spouse? Do you have extraordinarily high expectations for yourself?
3. List three things your spouse does well. Find ways to specifically voice your appreciation over the next week. Ask your spouse to do the same for you.
4. While hardships in marriage are impossible to avoid, some things in marriage should never be tolerated. Do you ever fear for your life or safety? Is your spouse physically hurting or threatening you? If so, immediately seek alternative shelter and safety and professional support. Call your local domestic abuse hotline, or if the threat is immediate, call 911.

Chapter 11: Building a Brand from Scratch

1. Are you able to adapt easily when things get sticky?
2. What is one dream project you have on your bucket list? What's keeping you from doing it? Is it a valid reason?

3. Do you have a hard time accepting anything that isn't absolutely perfect? In what way can you lower your standards so that you can enjoy the work you do?
4. With regard to that dream project, go to YouTube or your local library and look up three books or videos on the topic. Read or watch them. What did you learn?

Chapter 12: Trolls and Insecurities

1. Do you ever feel intimidated by others on social media or afraid that you don't measure up in some way?
2. What unique message do you want to bring to the table?
3. Do you compare yourself with others and let that comparison get you down? Not just with social media, perhaps, but in anything? The way you decorate your house compared to a neighbor? The success you have at your day job compared to your friends in a small group? What are ways you can eliminate that comparison?
4. Who in your life can step up as your cheerleader and encourage you every moment of the way? Talk to them. Tell them about your goals and dreams.
5. Do you realize that you really are wonderfully and beautifully made? Do you believe it? If not, remind yourself that you are because God specifically made you, and just as no two fingerprints or snowflakes are alike, there is no one on earth exactly like you.

Chapter 13: Monetize Through Social Media

1. Of all the ways you can monetize on social media, what is the path that looks the most intriguing? Why?
2. Write down a list of steps to get you started on that path, and then go for it.
3. Do you have a media kit? If not, start working on one now.
4. Do you know who you want to work with? Research three brands you would love to collaborate with.
5. Draft an email request for collaboration, without necessarily sending it yet, preparing you for the day you take that step.

Chapter 14: Patience and Peace

1. When did you have patience for something you wanted, and how sweet was the moment when you received it?
2. Do you struggle with feeling content with your life and the things in it?
3. How can you practice slowing down and feeling at peace with your life in the present?
4. What do you think of the old saying, “A change in geography does not create a change in character”? How is this true with what you’ve experienced in your life or seen from others?
5. What are the most important things in your life that bring you joy?



My childhood wash house in 1989.



Me as a child in church, singing with my family.



*The land as we were
felling trees.*



The land cleared and ready for building.

Photo courtesy of Leslie Brown.

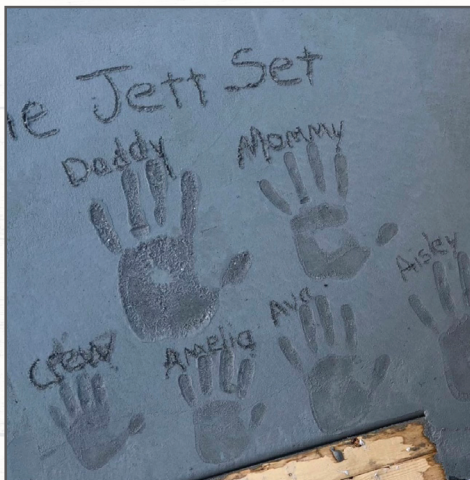


Our finished home.



Daniel marking out the footers.

Our family making our mark.





The house in the middle of framing.



Planing the pine from our property.



The Jett family in our future kitchen.



*Amelia building her own
house to match ours.
Lots of work, lots of play!*



Naptime at the build.

Sanding the walls with Amelia.



Working on social media in my makeshift office.

Photo courtesy of Leslie Brown.



The porcelain counters from SapienStone in my kitchen.

Photo courtesy of Leslie Brown.



More counters in my pantry.



*The outdoor space
before.*



Photo courtesy of Leslie Brown.

The outdoor seating area after.