

# Moments

*Magic, Miracles, and Martinis*

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HOW TO MOVE FORWARD  
IN TIMES OF UNCERTAINTY

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Amy Van Atta Slater

## ADVANCE PRAISE FOR MOMENTS

*Several years ago Amy Slater took the 24-hour challenge—the invitation to go twenty-four hours without complaining, about anything. And that decision changed her life. That is one of the many powerful stories Amy shares with us that inspire us to elevate our states—to upgrade our interpretations of our realities—and as a consequence, to upgrade, dramatically, our experience of life.*

*Amy is a model of positivity, authenticity, and personal transformation. Her stories will inspire you to move beyond your own fears and uncertainty. Each page of Moments will touch your heart and soul. I couldn't recommend it more highly.*

– CHRIS DORRIS, Mental Toughness Trainer  
and Personal Transformation Coach

*Honest, sincere and beautifully written, Amy Slater's stories touch the heart and inspire the spirit. A storyteller myself, I was charmed by Amy's anecdotes; they make living an authentic and spiritual life a present reality for inquiring readers on the path of self-discovery and personal growth. As the title suggests, there's a bit of magic in this book called Moments.*

– MAURA SWEENEY, Author, International Speaker,  
Ambassador of Happiness

*Genuine, Authentic, Hard Working and Full of Positive Energy! That is what describes Amy best. She leads and coaches with her heart, mind, and soul. Amy is amazing at helping raise your awareness to a higher lever, thus bringing clarity and grounding through her leadership and coaching. By incorporating compassion and logic in an incredible harmony, Amy makes you feel immediately understood, and as a result you have the right space to grow and flourish*

– LEDI, Sales Professional, Bay Area, CA

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Dedicated to the dear ones who made  
the moments magical:

My three amazing daughters Megan,  
Alyson and Jordan.

And to my parents, John and Pam Van Atta,  
who modeled unconditional love and respect.



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## INTRODUCTION



*“When you want something, all the universe  
conspires in helping you to achieve it.”*

– PAULO COELHO, *The Alchemist*

One day I decided: I am going to write a book. Then, I declared to the universe and to those kind enough to listen, “I am writing a book.” It became clear to me over time that the book would be governed by whatever happened, and I discovered that there is an uncanny comfort gained when you declare you are going to do something but do not need to know *any* of the details. There is also incredible power in declaring that you are going to do something when you do not know much about it, and it appeared the stories were spontaneously written by virtue of my declaration.

This reminds me of the time, five years ago, when I decided to run a marathon—decided and declared that I would run a marathon. I was dozing off in bed one evening while flipping channels when I stopped at The Biggest Loser program, which was in its final phase with the contestants running a marathon. I watched in awe as they dragged their tired, aching bodies across the finish line. I said to my husband, “Wow, I could never do that!”

“Why do you say that?” he asked. “I am sure you could if you put your mind to it.” That was exactly what I was afraid of in that moment. If I put my mind to it, I would have to do it. I figured I could train my body, but it was the mental toughness that accompanies the training and commitment needed to run a marathon that really concerned me.

Within moments, I decided (well, we decided) we would run a marathon. Two days later we registered for the Rock ‘n’ Roll San Diego Marathon, and within a few days after that had our “do it yourself” marathon book, *The Non-Runner’s Marathon Trainer*, in hand. Little did I know that once I declared it to others I would be “all in,” and there would be no turning back. In declaring it, I was one step closer to finishing it.

I am happy to say that I ran that marathon on June 7, 2010 (almost five years ago to the day of this writing), and joined the .5% of Americans who have also run a marathon. And, that was it. I have probably run less than 26.2 miles since that race, and instead am happy hiking, walking, and enjoying a slower, softer pace.

Not long after checking running a marathon off my bucket list, I embarked on a different journey—another marathon of sorts. Just three months following our hand-in-hand limp across the finish line, my husband and I decided to join a different population; not only had we finished a marathon, we had also crossed the finish line of our marriage.

Twelve months later, the sobbing that escaped my once stone façade broke the silence of my empty house. Where did the dream go? How did I get here? Alone. Empty. Defeated. Afraid. Divorced. It took me a long time before I could even mouth that word.●

## DIVORCED

How could I let down my family? *‘Til death do us part*, right? My parents had been married for fifty-one years, and they were always incredible role models. I felt like a failure, unable to make my marriage work after all of these years. Now, I thought, my three beautiful daughters are just another statistic of a “broken” home. I was overcome with fear and uncertainty as I imagined the road ahead.



*“Grief and pain are like joy and peace; they are not things we should try to snatch from each other. They’re sacred. They are part of each person’s journey. All we can do is offer relief from the fear: I am all alone.”*

– GLENNON DOYLE MELTON, *Carry on, Warrior: Thoughts on Life Unarmed*



Whether or not you initiate divorce, it sucks. There is no way around it. It just plain sucks. You don’t walk down the aisle thinking, “Oh, if this doesn’t work out, I will just get divorced. No big deal.” Well, it *is* a big deal. What I have learned in the last four years, however, is that it is what **you** make of it. You are the story you create, and it is up to you to write the rest of your story, which is why I wrote this collection of stories about the journey and awakening I experienced following my separation,

and ultimate divorce, after seventeen years of marriage. My intention here is not to write about the divorce or why it happened, or to place blame, shame, or hurt on anyone. My goal is to share how miraculous my life has become since breaking down the wall I had built over forty-five years. Perhaps through sharing my journey you too can be blessed with miracles that are merely masked by your own fear, and can more comfortably face the uncertainty that awaits you on your journey.

## CHAPTER TWO

# STOP COMPLAINING



*“Go 24 hours without complaining (not even once).  
Then, watch how your life starts changing.”*

– KATRINA MAYER, *The Mustard Seed Way*

Not long after the vulnerability wrecking ball knocked down that concrete wall around my soul, I was blessed with another close encounter of a new dimension. Raw and exposed, I felt that my awareness was at a much higher frequency. It seemed that someone (I will tell you who later) was pointing me in a new direction.

I was at a fairly new job at Salesforce.com when I had the opportunity to attend a fifty-person sales offsite in Scottsdale, Arizona. The group was large enough to generate tremendous energy, yet small enough for us to meaningfully engage. As the taxi pulled into the driveway of the hotel, I took several deep breaths of the dry desert air. I still had the tan line on my finger where my wedding ring had nestled for seventeen years, which in the past had provided a sense of security and belonging when I was away. But now, I was on my own.

On the first day of the offsite, we had a full agenda. Despite the Arizona heat, I sat shivering in the large conference room that was air conditioned down to a bone chilling temperature. Eight large tables filled the room, and I chose a table close to the exit in case I needed to make a quick get away. Once the seats were filled, the day quickly unfolded and, even now, remains one of the most inspiring days of my life.

Our mental toughness coach Chris Dorris spoke for ninety minutes, which flew by like ninety seconds, as he spoke of being All In, moving toward what you want and declaring, deciding, and doing what it takes. While I can't do his stories and teachings justice, I can pass along one of the tools I took away with me, one that has unlocked a treasure trove of infinite magic, lightness, discovery, and teachings.

At the end of his talk, Chris posed the group with a challenge. He said, "I challenge each of you to go twenty-four hours without complaining. If you complain, you must start the clock over. As you do this, slow down enough to watch what happens." Well, I was never one to pass up a challenge, so I decided "why not?"

I left the hotel with a kick in my step and a smile on my face. Somehow, I felt better equipped to face the uncertain road ahead than when I had arrived just twenty-four hours prior. Chris's words replayed over and over again in my head: Move toward. Don't complain. Decide. Be All In.

On my quick flight home from Arizona, I read through Chris's website and listened to his *All In* CD. I felt well armed, ready to go back to work and face the reality that was waiting for me at home—which was going through a transformation of sorts now that it was just the girls and me. I had embarked on the 24-hour challenge, which was pretty easy to stick to when you are sitting alone on a plane. The real challenge comes when you walk back

across the threshold to reality. I had yet to experience any magic that Chris promised would be on its way. I waited ...

The next morning as I was getting ready to leave for work, I stopped in my tracks when I saw my oldest daughter (age seventeen) sitting in tears at the breakfast table, her head in her hands. “Honey, what’s wrong?” She proceeded to share how sad she was that she and her high school boyfriend of two years were going off to out of state colleges and were breaking up.

Needless to say, her story tugged at my heartstrings. With the 24-hour challenge in the back of my mind I said, “I know how hard it is sweetie. Think how lucky you are to have experienced a love like this. Now, when you go off to college, you will know what to look for in a relationship. Some people never have that experience.” Prior to the challenge, I would have gone down into the abyss with her and commiserated about how unfair life is. Not this time, however.

As I began to walk away, I wrote down Chris’s website and suggested she watch the videos where he talks about mental toughness. As many teens do, she gave me a slight eye roll while mustering up a quiet “thank you.”

Once at work, I received a text from her. Simply written, “**I am** what I create.”

Was this the magic that Chris was talking about?

Later that morning, I received an email alert through my LinkedIn account. The email came from someone who had worked for me fifteen years prior, when I was a young sales manager trying to find her way in corporate America. To this day, years later, I have saved his message, as it is another example of the magic that appeared during my challenge:

Amy,

*I want to tell you this, and you might not even care; but I need to tell you. You were a great person to work for and you really care about people. I never should have left LCI when I was working for you. I have three brothers who are a lot older than me, and I was trying to achieve the success they had without putting in the work and time. I was too immature to realize that you needed to work hard at a company and put in the time before looking for a new opportunity.*

*Back then, it was a very confusing time in my life, and I should have sat down with you and discussed what was going on instead of jumping jobs.*

*I just want you to know that I enjoyed your friendship and your compassion as my boss. I always thought you were an awesome person!*

I was nearly sixteen hours into my challenge, and I was starting to believe in the magic that Chris had alluded to the day before. Every time I heard someone complain at work, it sounded like nails on a chalkboard—people must have wondered what kind of drug I was on as I moved so effortlessly through my day. I also noticed how hard it is for others to complain when you don't engage in the complaining with them. After studying more about this phenomenon, I learned to describe it as rising up to a higher vibration. Positive energy begets more positive energy.



“With each progressive rise in the level of consciousness, the “frequency” or “vibration” of energy increases. Thus, higher consciousness radiates a beneficial and healing effect on the world, verifiable in the human muscle response, which stays strong in the presence of love and truth. In contrast, non-true or negative energy fields induce a weak muscle response.”  
— DAVID R. HAWKINS, *POWER VS. FORCE*



Another way to describe this is to talk about the “O” line, or the line of observation. When I coach people or run sessions on influencing positive culture, I talk about staying above the “O” line, which happens when we use positive language and vibrations. We fall below the “O” line when we use negative words and thus lower the vibration. As an example, think about how we might describe the weather.

“O” Line: It is 90 degrees today.

“+” Above the O Line: It is a spectacular, sunny day.

“-” Below the O Line: I am melting from this dreadful heat.

Each of these phrases sets off different emotions and can be witnessed in a variety of discussions ranging from love to war.

Years later, I am convinced that friends, family, and colleagues would describe me now as a very positive, “Above-the O-line” type person. So much so, that people around me apologize when they themselves are being negative. They say things like, “I don’t mean to be negative, but ...” My answer to them is usually “then *don’t*.”

# RESOURCES

## IN PRINT

Paulo Coelho, *The Alchemist*

Glennon Doyle Melton, *Carry on, Warrior:*

*Thoughts on Life Unarmed*

Don Miguel Ruiz, *The Four Agreements*

Brené Brown, *The Gifts of Imperfection*

Brené Brown, *Daring Greatly*

Katrina Mayer, *The Mustard Seed Way*

David R. Hawkins, *Power vs. Force*

“Discovering Your Authentic Leadership,” Bill George, Peter Sims, Andrew N. McLean, and Diana Mayer,

Harvard Business Review 85, no. 2 (February 2007).

Scott Edmund Miller, *The User’s Guide to Being Human:*

*The Art and Science of Self*

James Rollins, *The Judas Strain*

Deepak Chopra, *The Book of Secrets:*

*Unlocking the Hidden Dimensions of Your Life*

Dr. Robert Holden, *Happiness NOW!,*

*Shift Happens!, Authentic Success* [www.robertholden.org](http://www.robertholden.org)

Vera Nazarian, *Salt of the Air*

Pema Chodron, *Fail, Fail Again, Fail Better*

## ONLINE

[www.ted.com/talks/](http://www.ted.com/talks/)

[brene\\_brown\\_on\\_vulnerability?language=en](http://brene_brown_on_vulnerability?language=en)

[www.christopherdorris.com](http://www.christopherdorris.com) – Chris Dorris,

Essentials for Health (IBS)– [www.essentialsforhealth.info](http://www.essentialsforhealth.info)

Kinetic Waves (EFT) – [www.kineticwaves.com](http://www.kineticwaves.com)

## ABOUT THE AUTHOR



After graduating from the University of California at Berkeley, Amy quickly found her passion in sales and has been a leader in business for over twenty-five years. A sought after speaker who encourages building ones professional brand and leading through the cultivation of culture, she is also a corporate strategy consultant and private coach for executives and business leaders. Amy's passion for people assists her in helping others grow their leadership skills as she guides them with heart and mind. She was a keynote speaker at the 2014 Forrester Research conference in San Francisco as well as a panelist at the Domo Women in Business Tour.

Amy is also very passionate about her responsibilities as a parent, and strives to model resilience, strength, authenticity, and gratitude for her three daughters.



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