



Living with Gusto

Elizabeth Day

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Fiction/Inspirational

2014 National Indie Excellence Book Award Finalist

Let's begin at the end. The final words from Ophelia, the narrator:

"I sometimes wonder if I did it on purpose, if I consciously broke everything in my life that was working. And if so, if I had known how it would feel to have my husband unable to look at me, if I had realized my daughter and I would go months without speaking, and if I had understood the extent of the destruction I would bring to the life we had built, would I have still done it? Would I have still made that single decision that became the turning point in our lives?

"I still wonder. Had I not created that catalyst that landed me in the grip of despair, would I have been able to hear Gusto telling me, "The suffering needs to end"? Or would the suffering have remained as silent as his voice had become?

"For now, I'll do as Gusto once asked me to do when the answers were mine to create. I'll let the questions roll on the backs of waves until the ocean of time turns them into something I want to reach out to and pull to me, until clarity surfaces and I want nothing less than to embrace it like the sweetness of a mango.

"For now, I have the one answer that matters. I know who I am. I am Ophelia."

Living with Gusto Details

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Author : Elizabeth Day

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From Reader Review Living with Gusto for online ebook

Debbie says

So many wonderful quotes. Just like the main character - I wanted to write them all down! Really makes you look at how you are living your life.

Julia Legian says

This is an empowering novel. It teaches you to enjoy simple things in life, to learn to accept and love oneself. Great work Elizabeth!

Dianne says

It is a strange book. I nearly stopped reading after the first chapter. But I read a few more pages. And then a few more. And I found myself being drawn into the book. There are powerful images here. Words worth remembering. Not everyone will like this book. But it spoke to me.

Corina says

Not very inspiring.

I was interested in the story of what Ophelia had done but we got almost none of that. We just got silly, boring, stiff scenes with Ophelia and Gusto.

I feel cheated of the hours that it took to read this, even though it didn't take that many hours.

Skip this one.

Margie Cady says

Opened My Eyes

This book resonated with me. Fears, doubts, guilt. Finding answers through trust, forgiveness, and letting go. I did wonder about the mistake Ophelia made at the beginning of the book, and how it affected others. But it also reminded me not to judge others. The answers are not trite-they are real. I already meditate, but I now will listen to my heart. And see what happens.);

Coral Christenson says

Book of thoughtful insight into self.

I re-read the book as I was reading it for the first time. It was definitely a reflective experience. Will visit the Gusto cafe.

Steve says

Very good and different...

Well written and full of meaningful insights about living in an authentic way. The way the book is written is very different because the chapters alternate between the main character's normal reality and her inner one -- I liked that. Recommend this book for anyone.

Biljana says

Inspiring reminder that life is to be lived fully

From the title , I was drawn to this story! it was calling me ? This is a beautifully written story, full of simple wisdoms for every day . I liked the flow of the story and the feeling I experienced while going from page to page! A must read!

Nora says

I think I read this at just the right time in my life. A year ago or a year from now, it might not have had the same punch. I originally thought it was a self-help book, and it was, but it wasn't. Back and forth between one woman's reality and her imagination, she comes to several conclusions about her life.

Cindy says

Good book.

A.K. Turner says

This is a beautifully written book that follows the same character through two dimensions. The first is what we know to be her daily reality, the world in which she lives, works, and parents. This story line carries with it a mystery of sorts; only as the book progresses do we find out what it is she's "done" and whether or not her actions can be (or should be) repaired. I won't say anymore on that so as not to spoil it, but it's

compelling.

The second dimension is the main character's dealings with Gusto, who we understand to be her inner wisdom of sorts, though the scenes with him take place with very real objects and lessons. I'm doing a terrible job of explaining this, which makes me appreciate the book even more, because the author does it so seamlessly and believably. With Gusto the protagonist is able to evaluate what is (and is not) important in her life, why she has made (or needed to make) the decisions she has, and what shape her life will take in accordance with her answers to those questions.

You have to have an open mind and an open heart. One of my favorite scenes in the book is when the main character describes how another couple looked with disdain on a project she'd been excited about. They dismissed it as "cheesy". The point of this is not what others think, but how you let that effect (affect?) you. She expresses anger at giving up on something which had very real meaning to her, just because someone else wrote it off. That scene represents an important part of how any reader should approach the book. If you are willing to be honest with yourself (not something everyone is ready for), this book can be an inspiring story of finding peace and happiness in the chaos of life and appreciating every little bit of that chaos along the way.

Beautifully written, compelling, inspiring. Highly recommend.

Marie (UK) says

a woman "destroys" everything. What she did is incomprehensible to all, including herself. What follows is almost an argument with her conscience / imaginary friend (Gusto) about how to forgive herself and move on. A fascinating read which has lots for everyone to consider

Caitlin Stier says

This was a tough one to get through. The story that is the driving force and the lessons learned were clear enough, but how it bounced back and forth left me feeling lost and frustrated. It took a long time for me to muddle through it, but at the end, I can't say I hated it. In fact, I liked it, but didn't love it. It could use some better transitions between her time with Gusto and what was going on in reality.

Renee T. says

I must've gotten this Kindle book for free because it's not one I would normally choose for myself, and I had no idea what it was about when I started reading it. I was pleasantly surprised, though. It was a quick read, and falls in the "inspirational" category. The story got pretty silly at times, but I thought the overall message had some good points about being honest with yourself and getting rid of fear that is holding you back. Might be a good read to recommend to someone that feels "stuck in a rut" in their life. (though I would not consider it a "how to" book, it has some good motivational quotes mixed into the story as the main character works through a hard time in her own life)

The main benefit of reading it would be the motivational statements, which are summarized at the end. I

think the story is the "love it or hate it" type where some people will be totally turned off and some will find it interesting.

Stacey says

Half the book wasn't bad but the other half was awful. The author alternates between telling the day to day reality of the main character's life and her relationship with "gusto" who is her inner zest for life. Without the gusto parts which I thought were just dumb the author could have developed the rest of the story into a decent novel.
