

The background features a soft, artistic illustration of bamboo stalks in shades of light green and grey, rising from a base of golden-brown grasses. The overall aesthetic is clean and natural.

Out of the Mire

It's necessary to go through adversities in life in order to get where God wants you. The real question is, will you choose to be who He created you to be?

*Guide your growth short-study guide.
To help you get started on your Fearless Growth journey*

Becky Michel
FEARLESS GROWTH STRATEGIST

OUT OF THE MIRE®



Creative Expressions Publishing

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Out of the Mire is a short study guide written to help you guide your own growth process, both in business and ministry and in your private life. You handle you; nobody can grow for you, and you certainly can't do it without God's help.

We will look at God's word through the growth of plants and trees, applying our own growth journey to scripture. Learn what it means to walk through, endure, and come out of the mire of life. At the end of each chapter will be questions and a time of reflection. Please take a moment to answer them, and journal any additional thoughts or feelings you have concerning this. Be Bold, Brave, and Boisterous.

Fearless Growth Strategist
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About Becky



Fearless Growth Expert – Becky Michel is the Author & Creator of Fearless Growth®. She has applied and shared this process for over a decade.

Author – of the three-part Fearless Growth® series as well as a series of children's self-help books. All publications are from a faith-based perspective. Fearless Growth® is a lifelong process. It is a journey to become exactly who God created you to be. God gave Becky Fearless Growth® to begin changing herself and then to help others. Change, choice, and challenge abound at the core of living a Fearless Growth® life.

Speaker – Becky brings an inspiring message of becoming the person God created you to be by standing up for yourself throughout that renovation process–Fearless Growth®. She shows you how to live life on purpose and push through the challenges that hold you back from experiencing growth and freedom in Christ so you can live free from addictions, childhood grievances, and the daily struggles of life.

Coach – Becky offers a Fearless Growth® coaching program that is "Real Life" constructed. It is about being honest with yourself about who and where you are. You will begin the process of change today, yet you will not do it alone! Let Becky help you discover–Fearless Growth®!

Creative Expressions is a division of Becky Michel.

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Table of Contents

Chapter 1.....	5
Chapter 2.....	7
Chapter 3.....	12
Chapter 4.....	12
Chapter 5.....	15



Chapter 1

In scripture, Peter's last words are: Ye therefore, beloved, seeing ye know these things before, beware lest ye also, being led away with the error of the wicked, fall from your own steadfastness.

But grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. To him be glory both now and forever. Amen. - 2 Peter 3:18

Peter's last words are a caution to us. We will face unpleasant things and there will be people who are going to knock you down, come at you and accuse you falsely. There will be people who will not understand you or be for you. You are going to go through some hard times. Why do the pains, disappointments and sins of life bring us down so much? While we may never understand, one thing is certain, God is there, ready and waiting with open arms, to know you, to help and guide you. The God of the universe is available to you personally. You can call on Him right now, right where you are, scared, alone, lost, or in sin. You can call on Him in any storm you are in, and pain or adversity of life. Then as you know Him, and walk with Him, He will extend his love and mercy to help you overcome your short-comings, and replace them with things such as temperance, kindness, forgiveness, patience, and peace. It is only through God that we can experience our highest growth and learn to walk in Him as our best self. Then finding peace and rest from the mire we endure, which enables us to live in the freedom God so lovely gifted us with, yet so many choose not to accept.

I like to think of mire as the growth zone. A great mentor of mine once said, change happens in the middle. It's so true. We can either go radically way over to this side, where we are not open to ever taking any risks, and live in a constant state of fear, or we can go way over to the other side, which makes us over vulnerable as we miss the mark of a firm foundation. Can the rush grow up without mire? Can we expect something amazing to come up out of a miry mess? Can we feel good about the adversities we endure in life? Can we overcome messes, both made by us or not made by us, but we were born into or chose to step into?



Reflection:

- ‡ Am I self aware?
- ‡ From both a personal and business perspective, have I ever given thought as to if I am planted right where God wants me?
- ‡ Consider the following when answering that question: where I live, go to school, and attend church...
- ‡ Am I aware that perhaps I am simply in a season of transition? If so, am I embracing it as a stepping stone and experiencing growth while there?
- ‡ Are my friends and groups that I keep company with the correct ones?
- ‡ Am I a people pleaser?
- ‡ Do I limit God's ability to work in my life?
- ‡ Is my business or ministry in the area God has called me to, or am I just trying to make a living?
- ‡ Am I running my business in a way that makes God proud of me?
- ‡ How do I know God has called me to be where I am at?



Chapter 2

And he shall be like a tree planteth by the rivers of water, that bringeth forth his fruit in his season; his leaf also shall not wither, and whatsoever he doeth shall prosper.—Psalm 1:3

The Chinese bamboo tree is known for its incredible ways and use. The growth pattern of this tree is remarkable, as the plant doesn't break the ground for a long time after it's planted. Then, after five years of consistent care shown to the plant over that time, something amazing happens, and one day it sprouts. It doesn't just sprout, but it quickly takes off and grows to a staggering ninety feet tall—that's right, ninety feet tall in a six-week period!

Can you imagine waiting for something to happen for so long, when on the outside it looks no different, but really under the surface it was growing all along? Imagine going outside every day, after day, to water this plant that you had to mark otherwise you wouldn't know anything was even there, only to never see the fruit of your labor for five lengthy years. I think about Noah building the ark. How many people do you suppose came by poking fun at him as he was working on his dream, a dream & calling God gave Him? Imagine building an ark because God said to, when people had never even heard of or seen rain? Five years is nothing compared to the forty years Noah spent working on this project. While the entire time people watched these strange efforts being made, wondering what in the world is wrong with this person. They obviously have lost their mind! And come on, let's be honest, I bet I would wonder the same about myself after a while as well. Wait, I have! Working on your dream isn't always a walk in the park, which is why we need a plan to guide us in order to defeat the enemy and opposition when it comes.

The harder the battle, the sweeter the victory. It's not about the mire, but about who you become as you walk through it. —Becky Michel.

Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me.—

Psalm 23:4

Hard times will come that will test your faith. The enemy will attack you. No matter who we are or where we are, we will not escape these things. I wrote No Shame, No Limits, and No Fear to help you learn how to take a genuine look at things, from a perspective of different lenses. It's easy to say what we would do if we were the ones building the ark, or fighting the battle, but until you tossed into that ring, in that unfamiliar territory, you really can't say because you haven't yet been there.

Try to see life as not happening to you, but happening for you. How often do we look at the mire we walk through as hard times and as trouble, rather than as all parts of a growth process?

There are two ways to live: you can live as if nothing is a miracle; you can live as if everything is a miracle. —Albert Einstein.



Reflection:

- ‡ A lot of things are going to catch you off guard in life. Know how to deal with the mire. Often what we are chasing or doing doesn't happen as quickly as we want it to, and more often, growth, both in our ministry, business, and personal life, is a slower process than we intended. How do you deal with this when you reflect and find yourself in frustration because you are not farther along than you wanted to be by now?

TIP: Have a place to go to; (an altar), the woods, your car or closet, somewhere quiet, where you can breathe and talk to God. Have a plan to push through frustrations when you feel them creeping up. This is all part of guiding your growth.

- ‡ How well do I handle change in my business and or ministry.
- ‡ How well do I handle change in my personal life.
- ‡ Do I regularly seek God's direction in all I do and say in both work and personal issues.
- ‡ Am I doing the things God wants in and with my life to the best of my abilities.

- ‡ Am I willing to ask and allow God to grow me more boldly and fearlessly.
- ‡ Do I make talking to God a regular part of my day.
- ‡ How can I better handle change.
- ‡ How do I really want to show up in the world.
- ‡ Do people see me in that way and if not, why.

TIP: When you can become self-aware, you can implement change at that moment. It's something I call STOP n SWITCH, which allows us to be consciously self-aware moment to moment. Decide on the "new" thought, change, reaction, or thing you will go to and start implementing it right now today!



Chapter 3

Though thy beginning was small, yet thy latter end should greatly increase. - Job 8:7

Through poor Job's mire, came this great verse to grow by. We all start out small, and without choice, we enviably grow into an adult. Just like the seed of that bamboo tree you can't see for such a long time; we are constantly learning while we grow. Even those who are "uneducated", or have some sort of learning disability, there is no stopping them. All people grow and learn with the tools that are available to them. Just because you may not have the right tools, doesn't mean you are not smart or can't get them. It's never too late to start over, or learn more, or began a new growth journey. Job started over. He could have thrown in the towel, drank away his pain and basked in his sorrows for the rest of his life, but through his pain he chose to be an overcomer, rise, and win with God, and God showed himself mighty in his life.

Unfortunately, most people give up too early. Believing that tiny little seed not showing any sign of growth after all that daily attention will never grow and they stop caring for it. They give up long before it's time to see the end results. Who besides me is thankful God didn't give up on you when people did? All the times looked like you were not learning or growing at all? Has anyone besides me ever had to get the same lesson again and again?

We may follow God consistently and see no change in our circumstances. It may feel like He's not there or isn't even listening. I believe it is in these moments He is teaching us the hardest lessons. Patience to be still, love, trust, mercy, grace to endure, and so on. Keep trusting Him, and just hang in there a little longer. Like the bamboo tree, something is happening beneath the surface. We must simply be patient in order to reap the results and in such a time that God prepares us for. His timing will never be ours. I hope that this study guide encourages you no matter what season you are in. If you are down, get back up. If you have thrown in the towel again, like I have, get back up. If you have fired yourself again, hire you back, and get back up! Perhaps you are simply just tired of waiting, or are wondering when God will show up. Remember, I will never become what I could if I get ahead of God or quit.

Over ten years ago, God put a calling on me to share my story. Now, if you know my story, you know I was like a horse at the starting gate, ready to run. Sounds good God, let's go! Then

questioned if I heard the instruction correctly a decade later, amongst many other questions. How many times did I throw in the towel over those ten years? A lot! At least I tried to, over and over, but God faithfully would hand it back to me, and remind me of who I was in Him and the mission of which He had for me. While I couldn't see anything happening, growing on the outside, I saw in year nine that He had been preparing the seed all along. It is up to me to continue to water and keep growing daily if I want to grow to where He wants me.



- ‡ As an entrepreneur, do you remember the dream coming to you? You envision it, plan for it, and build excitement, only to get that dream shot down in a hot minute? Funny how that works. It takes quite a while to hit a peak of enthusiasm, then in a split second we can lose it. That's just proof that God's goodness needs to take a front seat, rather than the negative nellys of this world.

TIP: Do you let fear find you in the growth of your business? If you can relate to the following questions, I encourage you to find a trusted friend or other entrepreneur whom can relate to you. Honestly talk this through with them, then began a weekly accountability call together. This will benefit you both as you grow together in personal life and your businesses.

- ‡ How well do I handle fear of failure?
- ‡ How do I deal with the fear of rejection?
- ‡ How well do I handle fear of the unknown?
- ‡ Is there a particular fear I am certain of that is holding me back from branching out into a new season in my business?
- ‡ Do I limit my belief in myself and who God says I am because of these fears?
- ‡ If so, what new thought can I implement right now in order to change this belief?
- ‡ What can I do right now, both in my business and personal life, to take action at conquering that fear?



Chapter 4

Every branch in me that beareth not fruit he taketh away; and every branch that beareth fruit, he purgeth it, that it may bring forth more fruit. -John 15:2

Without the pruning, we will not become all we had the potential to become. Remember, it's ok to have failures and encounter frustrations in all areas of life. It's part of the growth process. The only way we can produce more fruit is to be pruned. Regardless of how many times you get cut down, keep going! Keep doing the right thing in the pruning process. Sometimes God allows us to get cut down and cut back for a reason. When things happen that make little sense, just trust Him. Even when it feels unfair.

Now I don't have a green thumb, and am not a gardener, but when I cut my rose bushes, they grow back fuller than ever. It makes little sense, but how many things in life are like that? Sometimes it's hard to do what you need to. Especially when it involves relationships. You must allow God to prune you from something, or cut something loose when needed, and that's not always easy. It's a valuable reminder to trust the pruning process even when it makes no sense.

Learn to embrace the changing seasons in life. Particularly in your business, enduring the challenges and learning to grow in each one. Don't quit too soon. I have had a lot of business ventures on my journey. Some were a success, some a total bomb, but regardless, I always kept going, as I still am today. I want you to commit to five years of consistency in your Fearless Growth journey, and I know upon that concluded reflection it will amaze you at how far you have come.

I have always found it interesting that we sometimes burn off a field or woods. It wasn't until I took a burn class a few years back I learned the benefits of a controlled burn. It is necessary to remove plants that are already growing in order to help the new growth come up. Ultimately, a burn is simply to improve the health of a field. Fire can rejuvenate and purify. What looks damaging and seems like a poor plan can be for further growth. A couple years ago I had a field catch on fire, yes, another unplanned burn, and amazingly the grass in that field came back so beautiful. Not all bad comes from mistakes! A burn can get rid of dead leaves, trees, limbs, and other mire. It is necessary to go through some fire for future and more abundant growth.

And if one prevail against him, two shall withstand him; and a threefold cord is not quickly broken. -Ecclesiastes 4:12

Last year, we visited the California redwoods, some of the biggest trees I have ever seen. If you have never been, be sure to add it to your list, as it is such an extraordinary sight. The interesting thing about these giant trees is that the root systems are not deep. In fact, they are quite shallow. How can it be that they grow so tall and so wide, rarely ever falling over? Instead, their root system intertwines with the roots of the other trees next to it. Each other strengthens the others, enabling them to withstand strong winds and floods.

To look at them, you would never think this would work, as it doesn't seem to make sense. However, when God does the growing, you will not see it, as it always starts under the surface. It's the deep-rooted inside work that is done before it shows up for the world to see. It shows up by the strength in which we can withstand the storms of life, and how we show up. Do you allow him to do that inner work or do you resist it, continually trying to get there or figure it out on your own?



Reflection:

- ‡ As an entrepreneur, you must have persistent determination. If you have been in business for any length of time, you know what I am saying. If you are just getting started, prepare for pruning and believe that good things come through that pruning process. No matter all the mire you must go through, do you believe it is worth it?
- ‡ Am I working in pursuit of my purpose?
- ‡ Am I working in pursuit of my purpose with a clear plan?
- ‡ Why did I become an entrepreneur or why do I aspire to?
- ‡ What is it that will ignite the drive in me in order to keep going when challenges come? So that no matter how many times I get knocked down, I fearlessly rise up?
- ‡ Has my business grown in the past year?
- ‡ Am I happy with the growth I have had?

- ‡ Do I limit God's ability to grow my business into something I can't see because I want to control things?
- ‡ What are some changes I can make to experience my best growth both personally and in my business?
- ‡ Am I willing to ask and or allow God to grow my business more boldly and fearlessly?
- ‡ What are some goals I have as a business owner for the rest of this year?

TIP: Do you have a mission statement? You don't have to be a big company or have employees to develop and use a mission statement. I encourage you to write a mission statement to yourself. It will help you keep moving in the right direction when you get sidetracked by shiny objects like I have. I wish I would have implemented a mission statement many years ago. Your mission statement should include your purpose, values, and goals. Just google if you need examples! You can also check out vision statements. I have used a vision statement for both personal and business more than a mission statement. Research and do what works best for you!

TIP: It is vitally important to have a **WHY**. Why do you do what you do? Why are you in business for yourself? Do you know your why? When the season gets hard and growing pains come, you will need to fall back on your why to remember why you are doing what you are doing. Take some time and write a strong why or a stronger why if you already have one:



Chapter 5

As you can see, the growth process is not just to be done spiritually, but also fearlessly in the flesh, and it will show up in our businesses in either a good or bad way. God gives us free will to follow Him, to allow Him to grow us, to live a fearless lifestyle. But when we remain fearful and stop growing, so will all areas of our life. You can give the little seed as much water as it needs, but if it doesn't have light and soil, it just won't grow.

Now no chastening for the present seemeth to be joyous, but grievous: nevertheless afterward it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness unto them which are exercised thereby. -Hebrews 12:11

Discipline is not enjoyable. Anyone else ever experienced a Jesus whipping besides me? It is so painful, however later it produces a harvest of righteousness and peace when we choose to learn from it.

Last summer my oldest daughter revived a window seal of succulents she purchased off a clearance shelf at the greenhouse. They looked pitiful when she brought them home, like there was no hope for them, but she truly believed without hesitation she would bring them back to life... and guess what? She did! With a little water, some sunlight, and a bit of TLC, they lived and began to not just survive but grow and thrive. They got brighter, taller, and fuller, and she even had to repot them. She could even share them because they grew so nicely. Have you ever watched your mother or grandmother move a house plant around? I remember seeing this many times as a kid, often wondering why. I realize now, there were various reasons for this. If they got too much sunlight, it burned the leaves, therefore needed moved away from a window. In the winter, it may have been sitting too close to a vent, producing too much heat. A cactus which requires very little light might do amazing in a dark corner while the same corner will cause a sunlight loving plant to quickly wilt.

What if you could have grown greater than the five-foot plants in which you were first potted? What if you remained in this five-foot pot when God's plan for you was to grow to twenty feet? God has a special plan for each of us. How high could you rise if you didn't limit Him? When

you compromise your potential, knowing you were born for greater it affects all areas of your life.

Have you ever put yourself somewhere dark, dirty, or swampy? Perhaps sin crept up unintentionally, and you waded in before you realized what you truly got into. I've been there, wondering how the heck I got here, and so quickly. What about the times you intentionally waded into the mire in order to help a fellow brother or sister out, however you were the one that ended up getting stuck? I know what it's like to wade out into the mire, then realize you can't just quickly jump right out anytime you want. How you got there isn't necessarily important, but why is the key question. Why and a strong desire to turn and get out of it.

Amazingly, in my life, God has never ceased to show up, no matter what type of muck and mire I've gotten myself into. That's a mighty amount of unexplainable love.



*Can the rush grow up without mire? Can the flag grow without water? -
Job 8:11*

Without going through some mire we won't ever appreciate or be able to tell where we are on our Fearless Growth journey. Are we stuck, are we moving backwards, or do we even have a desire to grow any longer, and if not, it's time to pull out this guide and start asking yourself why? I'm certain, like me, you will go through this workbook and toss it to the side, understandably. However, I hope you can at least pray through some questions and get some clarity in the areas you need to move forward in your Fearless Growth Journey of life.

You will only grow into the pot in which you are planted. When you learn to guide your growth, you will become consciously aware of your limitations and the things that keep you from aligning with God's plan for you. It's up to you to guide your growth... will you choose to do so?

May you Fearlessly walk through life with Audacious Faith. God instructs us to be bold and have confidence in who we are, knowing that we are loved, blessed, and highly favored. May you be intentional about growth and learn to apply this lesson to stretch into your better self. Thanks for showing up and taking part in Guiding Your Growth. I hope you see the importance of consistency in the growth process of life and find God's mercies new every day! –Becky

For Keynote, Breakouts, and MC information, please visit Becky at BeckyMichel.com

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Becky Michel
**FEARLESS GROWTH
STRATEGIST**