

# **Build Your Bounce-Back Ability: A Christian's Guide to a Joy-Filled Life**

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## ***Discussion Guide***

*Build Your Bounce-Back Ability* (Abingdon Press, 2000) shows how God offers second chances in the challenges of life and makes all things possible. The twenty-six chapters provide practical strategies for learning the ability to “bounce back” from fear, failure, disappointment, and defeat and to build a stronger relationship with God.

*Permission granted to reproduce this discussion guide*

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### **Chapter 1**

#### **Build Your Bounce-Back Ability**

*This chapter introduces the God-given ability to bounce back from setbacks in life.*

1. What impressed you about Mary's response to losing her home? How did her faith help her?
2. Discuss each of the three Fs that provide a network for bouncing back from tragedy.
3. Make a list of ways in which God helps us bounce back from life's challenges.

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### **Chapter 2**

#### **Get Free from Clutter**

*This chapter helps you focus on what is important and put aside what is not.*

1. In your own words, explain what *clutter* means and give some examples from your own life.
2. Discuss each of the five steps for eliminating clutter, and explain why each step is important.
3. List some causes of a cluttered life and the consequences that come with it.

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### Chapter 3

#### **Lighten Up with Laughter**

*This chapter shows how laughter can be great medicine for many ailments.*

1. List some of the benefits of laughter and how it can help you bounce back.
2. Recall a time when laughter or a sense of humor helped you survive a difficult situation.
3. What makes you laugh? Identify some sources of laughter and humor.

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### Chapter 4

#### **Develop a Contagious Aura**

*This chapter shows how to enhance the spiritual climate you create.*

1. In your own words, explain what an aura is and what factors determine your aura.
2. Why is it important to develop a contagious aura? How can it help you in life?
3. Discuss the five steps the author lists to develop a contagious aura. Consider strategies for making them part of your life.

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### Chapter 5

#### **Don't Procrastinate**

*This chapter offers some remedies for the problem of procrastination.*

1. What are some common causes of procrastination? How can it prevent us from bouncing back?
2. Discuss some strategies for overcoming procrastination. What works for you when you want to get something accomplished?
3. Identify one project that is being delayed by your procrastination, and name one action step you will take to overcome it.

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### Chapter 6

#### **Be Sure You Are on the Right Bus**

*This chapter helps you persevere in achieving your goals and dreams.*

1. What does it mean to be “on the right bus” in life?

2. Discuss the three characteristics of successful people as described by the author. Why are these characteristics important?
3. List common obstacles that prevent us from reaching a goal. Suggest techniques for overcoming these obstacles.

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## Chapter 7

### **Learn the Power of Optimism**

*This chapter shows how to be a more optimistic person.*

1. Discuss the benefits of being an optimistic person.
2. Share a lesson you learned in your youth about optimism.
3. Discuss some strategies for becoming more optimistic. How would you rate yourself right now?

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## Chapter 8

### **Develop Staying Power**

*This chapter shows what you need to finish the race.*

1. What gives us staying power? Share some of the ways you have developed staying power in your life.
2. How can God help you develop staying power?
3. Share an objective you reached, and tell what helped you achieve that goal.

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## Chapter 9

### **Repair Any Spiritual Leakage**

*This chapter shows how to recharge your spiritual batteries and prevent burnout.*

1. In your own words, explain *spiritual leakage* and some ways it can be prevented.
2. Discuss the two sentences that changed the woman's life, and explain how the change occurred.
3. What are some of the symptoms and results of spiritual leakage?

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## Chapter 10

### **When Overwhelmed, Prioritize**

*This chapter helps you bounce back when suddenly you have too much to do.*

1. Discuss the four lessons the author learned from the apostle Paul about setting priorities.
2. Recall a time you were overwhelmed, and discuss how you tackled the challenge.
3. What was the most valuable advice about prioritizing that you learned from reading this chapter?

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## Chapter 11

### **Keep Your Dreams Alive**

*This chapter provides encouragement to turn dreams into reality.*

1. What dream of yours came to mind while reading this lesson? Share your dream.
2. What is preventing your dream from becoming a reality? What steps would you need to take in order to move ahead?
3. What did you learn in this lesson about “testing” your dream and counting the cost?

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## Chapter 12

### **Let the “E-Factor” Work in You**

*This chapter explores the power of enthusiasm and how to harness it.*

1. Explain what enthusiasm is and how it can be acquired.
2. What are some benefits of being an enthusiastic person?
3. Describe an enthusiastic person who has influenced your life.

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## Chapter 13

### **See Your Work as a Blessing**

*This chapter shows the benefits of work and of viewing work in a positive manner.*

1. See how many blessings you can list that come from work.
2. Describe your work and what you like about it.
3. How is your work a blessing to others?

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## Chapter 14

### **Know How to Be “Real”**

*This chapter shows how to live as a person of integrity.*

1. Explain what it means to be a “real” person. Give an example of a “real” person, living or dead.
2. Being “real” is a gradual process. What helps us become “real” people?
3. What are the benefits and costs of being a “real” person?

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## Chapter 15

### **Choose Life and Live Abundantly**

*This chapter is about God’s gift of choice that leads to abundant life.*

1. Explain what living an abundant life means to you.
2. Discuss the four characteristics we need in order to live an abundant life.
3. Which of the four characteristics would you most like to have in your life? Why?

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## Chapter 16

### **Minister Through Your Presence**

*This chapter is about the ministry of standing with others in their times of trouble.*

1. Explain what ministry through presence is and what it involves.
2. Recall a time or incident in your life when someone ministered to you by being with you.
3. Discuss a book or movie that had an impact on your faith or your ministry to others.

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## Chapter 17

### **Discover Your Prayer Power**

*This chapter shows how to use the special gift of prayer.*

1. Share a time when you used your prayer power.
2. Discuss “shooting prayers” and how they can be used to help others.
3. List some of the benefits of prayer and how prayer can improve your ability to bounce back.

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## Chapter 18

### **Try Giving Yourself Away**

*This chapter is about having compassion and sensitivity toward others.*

1. What impressed you about Ellen's essay?
2. Recall a time when someone ministered to you through compassion.
3. List some intangible gifts that you can give to others.

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## Chapter 19

### **When Stressed, "Wait Upon the Lord"**

*This chapter shows how to manage the daily problems of life.*

1. What has worked for you in avoiding or managing daily stress?
2. What Bible verse helps you cope with stress, and why?
3. Explain why a certain amount of stress is good for you.

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## Chapter 20

### **Keep On Keeping On**

*This chapter shows how God can help you survive difficult circumstances.*

1. Recall a time of crisis or struggle and how your faith helped you cope. What did you learn from the experience?
2. What helped Amanda bounce back? What was her turning point?
3. What are some of the things we need to remember about ourselves and about God in times of trouble?

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## Chapter 21

### **Take Hope with You into Every Day**

*This chapter focuses on hope and how it can get you through tough times.*

1. What does it mean to have hope? Give an example from your life.

2. Discuss ways in which hope kept you going during a difficult time.
3. Share some of your current hopes and ways in which you keep them alive.

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## Chapter 22

### **Believe in Angels**

*This chapter explores God's angels and people who act as angels.*

1. How has your life been touched by angels?
2. What do you believe about angels? Explore what the Bible says about them.
3. Discuss ways in which we can serve as angels to people in need.

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## Chapter 23

### **Become a Geriatric Gypsy**

*This chapter is about being active and open to new things as you grow older.*

1. Explain what the author means by “geriatric gypsy” and list some of their habits.
2. What are some of the benefits of being active and open as you grow older?
3. List some activities that geriatric gypsies can experience. Which activities most appeal to you?

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## Chapter 24

### **Turn Tragedy into Triumph**

*This chapter shows how faith in God can help you triumph over tragedy.*

1. What impressed you about the story of Lundy Mills?
2. What personal qualities does it take to turn tragedy into triumph?
3. What are some of the things we need to remember about God's love during tough times?

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## Chapter 25

### **Age Gracefully**

*This chapter provides help in making the most of your senior years.*

1. What can you do today to help you prepare for productive years as an older adult?

2. In your own words, explain what it means to age gracefully.
3. List some characteristics and behaviors of people who age gracefully.

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## Chapter 26

### **Remember That You Are Chosen**

*This chapter serves as a reminder that you are chosen and empowered by God.*

1. What does it mean to you to be chosen by God?
2. What are some ways we can respond to being chosen by God?
3. What new insights did you receive from reading this book?