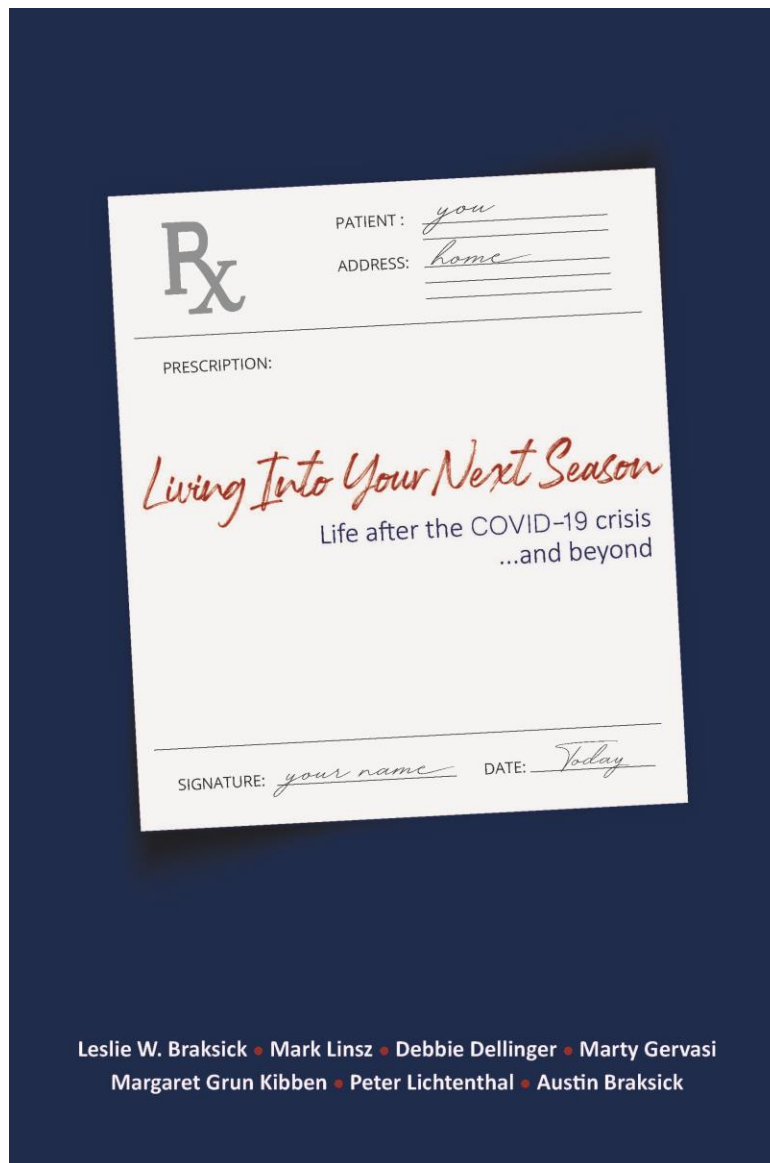


May 12, 2020

Soon-to-be-published book:
Living Into Your Next Season
Life After the COVID-19 Crisis . . . and Beyond
(estimated publication: May 2020)

Book cover:



Summary of the Book

COVID-19 stopped us in our tracks and upended our lives. The world has changed. We have seen so many tragic direct and indirect ripple effects, from sickness and loss of life, to iconic companies facing bankruptcy or closure, to the extreme mental and emotional toll on healthcare workers and others touched in personal ways by this pandemic. When we pause and consider the scope of it all, it's overwhelming.

And yet, unexpected gifts also came from this time. Life was simplified. People began spending more time with their family—taking walks, playing games, eating dinner together. Business meetings and educational classes were held by video and teleconference. Our country and the world aligned around a common enemy and a common goal. We are in this together.

Living Into Your Next Season: Life after the COVID-19 Crisis . . . and Beyond addresses the questions: Where do we go from here? What do our individual and collective post-COVID-19 seasons hold for us? And what learnings do we carry forward from this time? The authors, who specialize in helping people make transitions in life and careers, bring their different voices together to share, help, teach, offer, thank, empathize, and encourage. They invite you to join them in this important conversation now, as we will all, surely, again face unwelcomed, unwanted, unforeseen, silver-lined changes in the future.

About the Authors

The authors of *Living Into Your Next Season: Life after the COVID-19 Crisis . . . and Beyond*, are colleagues of MyNextSeason who specialize in helping people through transitions in life and in their careers.

About My Next Season

MyNextSeason was founded by Dr. Leslie Braksick and Mark D. Linsz, with the vision of partnering with companies and individuals to provide support through important, and often fragile, life and career transitions. MyNextSeason's caring yet pragmatic approach demonstrates an understanding of, and respect for, individuals' vulnerability during times of transition and provides them with the tools to navigate—and realize—a joyful next season.

Dedication of the Book

The book has been dedicated: *To the frontline medical workers who were there for us when we needed them most, and to the family members and friends of those who succumbed to the COVID-19 pandemic.*

Assignment of Income from the Book

Income from the sale of the book is being donated to the **Foundation of the National Association of Student Nurses, Inc.** to provide financial scholarships for nurses.

Book Publication:

The book will be published by Amazon Publishing (*estimated May 2020*).

Book Chapter Titles and Contributing Authors

Chapter Title

Contributing Author

- | | |
|--|------------------------------|
| 1. Our Lives, Interrupted | Leslie W. Braksick, PhD, MPH |
| 2. Leadership Through Times of Crisis | Peter Lichtenthal |
| 3. How COVID-19 Made Me a Better Leader, Husband, and Father | Austin B. Braksick |
| 4. Life Upended | Marty Gervasi |
| 5. Faith in the Face of Adversity | Margaret Kibben, DMin |
| 6. Choosing Your Next Season | Leslie W. Braksick, PhD, MPH |
| 7. Reflections as You Prepare for Your Next Season | Mark D. Linsz |
| 8. Moving Into Your Next Season | Debbie L. Dellinger |
| 9. Resilience, Gratitude and Grace | Leslie W. Braksick, PhD, MPH |

Preface

Leslie W. Braksick, PhD, MPH

We do not learn from experience . . . we learn from reflecting on experience.

—John Dewey

The pandemic of 2020, COVID-19, has affected the lives of every single person in the world—directly or indirectly. Even if you and/or your family were fortunate enough to escape the illness, you have been impacted by stay-at-home orders, or the closure of businesses; the cancellation of sporting events, concerts, and theater; the shift to online schooling; postponement of elective medical procedures; adult children living with you; the inability to visit an elderly relative or someone you care about in the hospital. Perhaps you've been tragically impacted by the death of someone you cared about, workforce furloughs, or reductions in staff.

Many of us have been touched by postponement of graduations, award ceremonies, trips, flights, meetings, or celebrations. All of us have been asked to stay at home, wear a mask when we go out, and stay six feet apart from any other human. In my case, after thirty years of weekly air travel for business, I have been grounded and ordered to sleep in my own bed every night, after working all day in my home office. My days now end with a long walk, a homemade dinner, deep conversations with my husband and adult daughter, and nightly prayers that the bad parts of this global pandemic end soon, with flattened curves, a vaccine, and greatly reduced spread and deaths—while the best parts of what have come from it—last forever.

The pandemic of 2020 has spared no one. It is an “intervention” unlike any other of our generation—and everyone is affected by it in one way or another. So it begs the question: where to from here? What do our collective and individual post-COVID-19 next seasons look like? How do we take learnings from this to help us through future, not-yet-known crises?

That's what this book explores and encourages you to be intentional about.

The authors of *Living Into Your Next Season: Life After the COVID-19 Crisis . . . and Beyond* specialize in helping people make significant transitions in life and careers. They are colleagues at My Next Season, an organization whose mission is to help people pivot from their main careers/lives to their next seasons . . . carrying forward the best of what they wish to continue or find, and leaving behind the habits and practices they wish to shed. They were selected, specifically, to bring different voices to this topic.

These authors have come together, in the middle of the crisis, to share stories, highlight heroes, put words to our collective experiences, and provide some wisdom as we all transition into a new normal—one that has the potential to be better than the one we knew before COVID-19.

They share experiences of others, insights gleaned, and frameworks to encourage us to move forward from this unique, unwelcomed time in our lives and history in ways that make us all better for having been on the journey together. And they give us words of hope and encouragement for the future—when we will, sadly, find ourselves navigating other crises.

Chapter 1 opens with the many ways this pandemic *interrupted our lives*—and the opportunity we have to make that interruption count for something bigger.

Chapter 2 provides lessons and examples of leadership through times of crisis. We have been inspired by many acts of leadership all around us—that made a difference.

Chapter 3 is written by a 25-year-old manager, husband, and father—and offers an honest and vulnerable account of how COVID-19 made him better in all categories of his life.

Chapter 4 acknowledges the significance of *lives upended* during this strange time. The author will share interviews with folks who have been impacted in a variety of ways by the pandemic crisis.

Chapter 5 remarks on the faith that has been necessary to endure this period: Faith in the face of the countless challenges to our daily lives that have threatened to deny any reason to hope. Faith in the face of the unknown this time of uncertainty and transition has imposed on our sense of order and stability. And it's our faith—in our families, in the medical providers, and in our understanding of an ultimate power—that will enable each of us to thrive in the face of the adversity of these days.

Chapter 6 gives you some pragmatic tools and stories about finding and *transitioning into your post-Covid-19 next season*.

Chapter 7 invites you to *reflect* on lessons learned in this season and hear advice from experts who help people make career and life transitions, on how to carry forward with our intentions for changes in our lives.

Chapter 8 helps us take concrete steps to *move toward* the new life we want to live into next.

Chapter 9 concludes with the recognition that as humans, we are incredibly resilient creatures. We will persevere with the new normal after COVID-19. And there will be other things down the road that call us to show *resilience, gratitude, and grace* as we navigate adversities and pursue joy in our next seasons.

We have been and will continue to be changed by this. We have been saddened and joyful; disappointed and inspired. We will never be the same as we were before COVID-19—and we shouldn't be, if we allow this time to make us better. So, let us all move forward even while we are still navigating challenges, and be our better selves.

If we don't find silver linings in the tragedies of our lives, and become better as a result, then the tragedies win.

Abbreviated Author Bios

Dr. Leslie W. Braksick is a behavioral scientist with a graduate degree in Public Health. She is currently an advisor to corporate executives and boards on matters of leadership, transitions, and change. She is co-founder of MyNextSeason, a company that specializes in helping people through transitions in life and careers. Prior to starting MyNextSeason, Leslie co-founded and led The Continuous Learning Group, Inc., personally consulting to its senior-most clients for twenty-one years. Leslie is a published author of books and articles on matters of leadership and transitions. Best known for her concern for others, candor, and expertise in supporting clients through complex situations, Leslie currently serves on the boards of Princeton Theological Seminary and Children's Hospital of Pittsburgh.

Mark Linsz is co-founder and Senior Managing Partner of MyNextSeason, providing comprehensive support to executives at all phases of professional transition. Prior to MyNextSeason, Mark held key risk and financial leadership roles on three different continents for Bank of America, most notably steering the company safely through the worst of the 2008 financial crisis as Corporate Treasurer. He leverages expertise from his corporate career as a board member for private equity, financial services, and investment firms, including BlackRock and Deposit Trust and Clearing Corporation, and CNL Strategic Capital. He has a passion for global not-for-profit work, serving on the board of Opportunity International, African Bible Colleges, and LifeNet International.

Debbie Dellinger is Director of External Engagement for MyNextSeason, overseeing philanthropic partnerships, not-for-profit strategy, board education, and networking practices. Attentive and thorough, she is dedicated to matching the wealth of experience possessed by transitioning executives with organizations where their talents and abilities can make a meaningful and mutually beneficial impact. A dedicated community volunteer for more than two decades, Debbie previously served as the Lay Leader of Missions, Education, and Life Skills at the nation's largest United Methodist Church, managing a volunteer partner program impacting 2,200 children in the Kansas City Metro area. She also spent five years as Board Chair of The Hope Center supporting at-risk urban youth and families. Before transitioning to her career serving not-for-profits, Debbie spent nearly a decade working for GE Consulting and Honeywell Information Systems.

Marty Gervasi is a MyNextSeason Senior Advisor and valued board member with nearly thirty years of experience leading human capital transformations that drive business results. She most recently served as Chief Human Resources Officer of The Hartford Financial Services Group and a key member of the executive leadership team, where she led the company's strategic objective to be a destination for talent. Previously, she held global HR roles at GE and Saudi Base Industries Corporation (SABIC). Marty is a Trustee and Executive Committee member for the University of St. Joseph in Connecticut. She previously served as an executive board member for Health Transformation Alliance, a cooperative of fifty corporations committed to enhancing quality and cost of care for their six-million-plus members.

Peter Lichtenthal is a MyNextSeason Advisor, not-for-profit board director, leadership and marketing consultant, and university guest-lecturer. He spent nearly thirty years as an innovative senior executive at The Estée Lauder Companies, highlighted by his roles as International General Manager of the company's flagship Estée Lauder Brand, Global General Manager of M·A·C, and as Global Brand President of the Bobbi Brown, Smashbox, and Bumble and bumble cosmetics and haircare brands. Passionate about supporting his community and the arts, Peter currently serves as Vice Chair of Point Foundation Board of Directors and Co-Chair of the foundation's Selections Committee, and he is a Board Member of Second Stage Theater in his native New York City.

Dr. Margaret Grun Kibben is an independent consultant providing executive-level ethical, moral, and spiritual advisement. Serving as a Navy Chaplain for over thirty years, she culminated her career as Chief of Navy Chaplains, retiring from the Navy in 2018. During her tenure as Chief, she led more than 2,500 Navy, Marine Corps, and Coast Guard religious ministry professionals. She served as a trusted advisor to senior military officers providing insight regarding resiliency, ethics, and moral character. She previously served as Command Chaplain for the Combined Forces Command in Afghanistan, advising both Afghan and US leaders. Margaret is on the boards of Princeton Theological Seminary, the Inamori International Center for Ethics and Excellence, and the Marine Corps Scholarship Foundation.

Austin Braksick is a Commercial Manager of Sales Development with Xactly Corporation, providing cloud-based enterprise software and services to enhance sales performance across a variety of industries. He transitioned to the SaaS technology space after spending his early career in professional sports in tickets sales with the Colorado Avalanche and as an intern with the Cincinnati Reds helping support the Reds Community Fund. Austin has a calling for faith-based mission work and has participated in trips to the Dominican Republic, Jamaica, Ghana, and Costa Rica, among others.

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