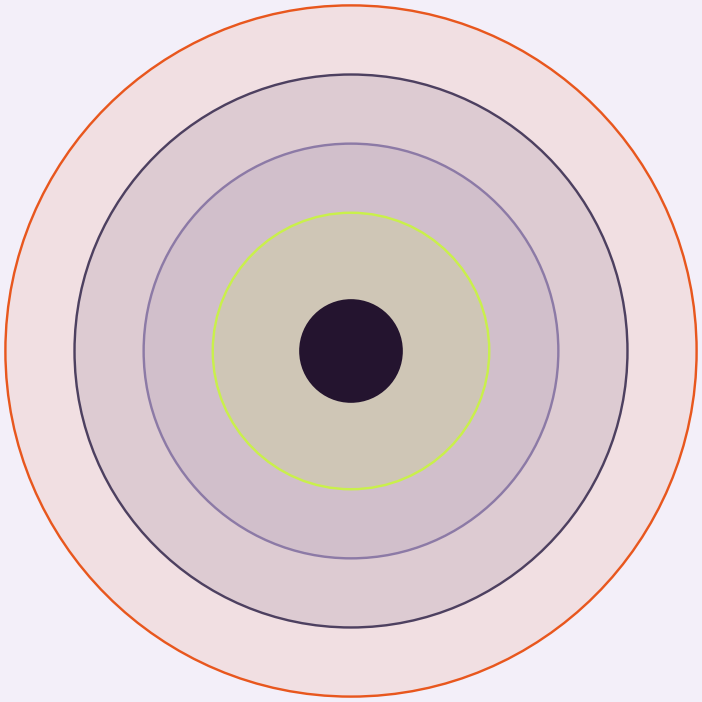


Start With Yourself

A reading of the book by Emma Grede (2026)

1. ACTION BOOK

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ABOUT THIS EDITION

This is HourLife's reading of Start With Yourself, in our own words. It is not a substitute for the book.

BEFORE YOU START 01

The book in a minute

Emma Grede, co-founder of Good American and a founding partner of SKIMS, on replacing the Old Thoughts you inherited about work, money and ambition with New Thoughts you chose — part memoir, part self-help mindset for work and life.

Below are the 8 ideas HourLife readers vote up most, each in our words with a note on what it asks of you, and then the steps that put them to work.

WHAT READERS KEEP

The takeaways

1 HOURLIFE TAKEAWAY

No one is coming to save you — and that is the sentence that hands the next move back to you.

A refusal of the waiting posture: no permission, no discovery, no right moment arriving from outside. It reads harsh and functions as relief.

2 HOURLIFE TAKEAWAY

Most of what you believe about money, ambition and family is an Old Thought you never actually chose.

Name inherited rules as rules, then swap each one for a New Thought you have argued for yourself.

3 HOURLIFE TAKEAWAY

Anger, fear, guilt, sadness and joy are business skills. Unmanaged, they will collect on you later.

HourLife's framing: regulating anger, fear, guilt, sadness and joy is operational competence rather than personal work done on the side.

4 HOURLIFE TAKEAWAY

An exceptional life is bought with trade-offs, and refusing to name them does not stop you paying.

Success means difficult decisions and compromises. The unnamed ones still get made, just by default.

5 HOURLIFE TAKEAWAY

Start with the customer's actual problem, then build the thing nobody bothered to build.

Listening to customers directly beats positioning. Hearing the same gap repeatedly is the signal to build for it.

6 HOURLIFE TAKEAWAY

Hire the expert and put the ego down. Your job is standards, not being the cleverest person in the room.

High standards held, execution handed to people who are better at it than you are.

7 HOURLIFE TAKEAWAY

The bad job is not wasted time. It is a paid education and a contact list.

Every position, including the resented ones, hands you something extractable. Resenting it and extracting from it are not mutually exclusive.

8 HOURLIFE TAKEAWAY

Your ambition does not have to be an empire. It does have to be yours.

Scale is one option; the test is whether the vision is one you chose rather than one you absorbed.

PUT IT TO WORK

Your action book

Do the setup steps once, then keep the habits going. The setup changes your week; the habits keep it changed after the first good one.

The download puts this whole reading and a printable action book in one PDF: the setup checklist, then a page of real calendar days for each habit, starting on the day you choose.

SET UP ONCE

- [ ] Write six Old Thoughts, one per area
- [ ] Draft the New Thought next to each one
- [ ] State the vision in one specific sentence
- [ ] Name the trade-offs you are choosing this year
- [ ] Learn what your thing actually costs

KEEP UP DAILY

- ◯ Talk to five customers a month, yourself
- ◯ Name the emotion before you act on it
- ◯ Extract one thing from the job you resent

30 days · Nov 11 - Dec 10, 2026

Part two, after the reading, prints each of these as a page to fill in by hand.

THE LAST WORD

Before you go

Pick one step from the action book and do it today. An idea from a book starts to count once it changes what one ordinary day looks like.

PART TWO

The action book

Change the setup once, then keep it up. 5 setup actions to do once, and 3 habits to mark each day for 30 days.

Nov 11 - Dec 10, 2026

Print it, or write on it in any PDF app.

SET UP ONCE

The setup checklist

Each of these is done once. Do one a day, and check it off when it is done.

- [ ] SETUP 1

Write six Old Thoughts, one per area

Work, money, career, family, business, leadership.

One inherited belief for each — the sentence you would say without thinking. You cannot replace what you have not written down.

MY VERSION

DONE ON

- [ ] SETUP 2

Draft the New Thought next to each one

Not the opposite — the version you can actually defend out loud.

If you cannot argue for the replacement, the Old Thought stays and you know why you are keeping it.

MY VERSION

DONE ON

- [ ] SETUP 3

State the vision in one specific sentence

Specific and slightly embarrassing beats noble and vague, because you can tell whether you got there.

MY VERSION

DONE ON

- [ ] SETUP 4

Name the trade-offs you are choosing this year

Write the two things you will do well and the two you have decided to be bad at for now.

Unnamed trade-offs still get made — by default, and usually badly.

MY VERSION

DONE ON

- [ ] SETUP 5

Learn what your thing actually costs

Unit cost, margin, salary bands, the real number.

Respecting a customer's money starts with knowing precisely what you are asking them for.

MY VERSION

DONE ON

DAILY HABIT 1 OF 3

Talk to five customers a month, yourself

Not a survey and not a summary from someone else.

Nov 11 - Dec 10, 2026 · 30 days · circle each day you do it

SMALLEST VERSION

CUE

WHERE

November 2026

MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT	SUN
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11 ○	12 ○	13 ○	14 ○	15 ○
16 ○	17 ○	18 ○	19 ○	20 ○	21 ○	22 ○
23 ○	24 ○	25 ○	26 ○	27 ○	28 ○	29 ○
30 ○						

December 2026

MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT	SUN
	1 ○	2 ○	3 ○	4 ○	5 ○	6 ○
7 ○	8 ○	9 ○	10 ○	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30	31			

EACH FRIDAY

WHAT HELPED

WHAT GOT IN THE WAY

ONE CHANGE TO THE SETUP

DAILY HABIT 2 OF 3

Name the emotion before you act on it

Anger, fear, guilt, sadness or joy — say which one is driving, then decide.

Nov 11 - Dec 10, 2026 · 30 days · circle each day you do it

SMALLEST VERSION

CUE

WHERE

November 2026

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EACH FRIDAY

WHAT HELPED

WHAT GOT IN THE WAY

ONE CHANGE TO THE SETUP

DAILY HABIT 3 OF 3

Extract one thing from the job you resent

A skill, a process, a person worth keeping.

Nov 11 - Dec 10, 2026 · 30 days · circle each day you do it

SMALLEST VERSION

CUE

WHERE

November 2026

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December 2026

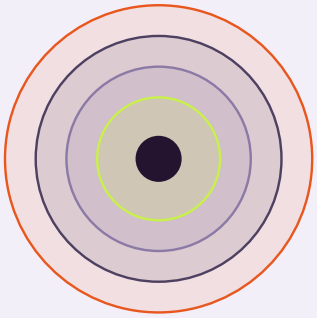
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EACH FRIDAY

WHAT HELPED

WHAT GOT IN THE WAY

ONE CHANGE TO THE SETUP



No one is coming to save you. That is not the bad news — it is the only version of this where the next move is yours.

EMMA GREDE