

## ***About Living a Spirituality of Action: A Woman's Perspective***

“Own your gifts and use them to make the world a better place,” Catholic theologian Joan Mueller writes. In this practical book she provides us with ideas and encouragement to live and act with courage to change the world, even if our actions are sometimes small.

This is a book for all who hear about hungry people living in the park and decide to make sandwiches, who volunteer to teach children to read, who raise money to change systems that provide substandard care to the vulnerable, who can imagine a mothered world. Mueller invites us to discuss and embrace our shared wisdom.

A woman's goal, Mueller tells us, is to wake up every morning and ask, “God, what do you need me to do for you today?” and to listen to God respond, “And what do you need from me today?”

### **Discussion Questions**

#### Chapter One

1. How can you make your world a more “mothered” world?

#### Chapter Two

2. At times, are you frustrated by injustice? How do you handle this? What do you do with your frustration?
3. When in your life have you been challenged to “do the truth in love”?

#### Chapter Three

4. Describe the lives of wise women you have known in your life.
5. In your own volunteer work or in reaching out to others, what practices have you found to keep your balance?

#### Chapter Four

6. How can you make a difference in the world without taking on more time-consuming projects?

#### Chapter Five

7. How can I foster a deeper “preferential option for the poor” in my own life? Where and who are the poor in my community? What are their needs?

8. What might I do to make sure that my donations and gifts to the poor are truly helpful? How might my altruism be wiser?

#### Chapter Six

9. Do I believe that I can trust God to return one hundredfold the gifts I offer? Have I had experiences of this kind of generosity of God in my own life? What gift do I have that might make a difference in the lives of others?

#### Chapter Seven

10. How would I describe my lifestyle to someone? Why would living a simple, basically ordered lifestyle be of value? What changes can I make to live more simply?
11. If you decide to “get out there,” what concrete plans do you need to make? Would it be helpful to set up a three- to six-month timeline for yourself and then evaluate your progress toward an altruistic commitment?

#### Chapter Eight

12. Can you identify a specific time in your life when you chose *agere contra*? How did you feel about yourself after making this choice? How did others feel about you? Have you ever had an experience of failing to make such a choice because you were afraid? If so, who or what can help you overcome your fear?
13. What would you identify as the successes and failures of Jesus’ life? What would you identify as the successes and failures of your own life?

#### Chapter Nine

14. What makes you “worried and upset”? What helps you move beyond being “worried and upset”?
15. What would the world look like if women everywhere purposefully tried “to do just one thing to make the world better”? How can women support each other in their service?

#### **About the Author**

JOAN MUELLER, O.S.C., PH.D., is a professor of theology and Christian spirituality at Creighton University in Omaha, Nebraska. As founder and executive director of Project Welcome Sudanese Community, she promotes the educational and social development of Sudanese refugees in Omaha. She has written books and articles about Franciscan spirituality, discernment, forgiveness and ministry with the poor. A Franciscan Sister of Joy, she has dedicated her life to organizing and developing networks of people whose purpose is to make a true difference in the lives of the poor.