

THE  
SCHOOL OF  
**WOMANLY**  
**ARTS**



# 5 DAYS *of* RECEIVING

BY REGENA THOMASHAUER AKA MAMA GENA



## Dear Sisters,

Women, we know how to give.  
We know how to over-give.  
But — have you noticed? — we have no idea how to *receive*.

We get offered a seat on the bus but say, “Oh no, thanks, I’m okay.” Even with throbbing feet from a long shift, or a baby on the hip.  
We win an award, but give all the credit to our team.  
A friend offers to help in a crisis but we decline because we know she’s busy too.  
Most of us don’t even know how to receive a *compliment*.

We brush these offerings away, shrug them off, or flat out deny them.  
Especially when they are true.  
Especially when they are deserved.

And let me tell you, I’m not immune to this either. If I’m not vigilant, and awake, and walking my talk — I’ll start rejecting good things. Upper-limiting.

I’ll default to the cultural conditioning: good women live to please, to serve, to give. I’ll forget that even if that is true — which it isn’t — what I want to be more than good, is happy. What I want to be more than happy, is free.

So, learning to receive, for a woman, in these times, it is radical. And I know you’re here for it.

The core truth here is that we can’t receive any more love than already exists, inside, for ourselves. And the less love and acceptance we have for ourselves, the more disempowered we will feel.

To raise all women higher, one commitment we can individually make is to expand our own receptivity for goodness.

Most of us were never taught to receive, but the good news is it’s a skill we can all learn. Just takes a little practice.

Correcting our inability to receive by joyfully taking in praise and offerings can feel... awkward. Strange. Silly. Selfish, maybe. But, actually, isn’t it more silly not to receive a compliment? To push away the love, time, or space that wants to come into our lives?

Here are a few challenges to help you begin your new receiving practice, right away.

*Regena*

## CHALLENGE 1: TAKE IN COMPLIMENTS

Decide that the next time someone gives you a compliment, you are going to pause to really, really feel it before responding with: "Thank you!"

And then ... stop talking.

Sometimes we want to credit our hairstylist for how nice we look, or confess how inexpensive the dress really is or say, "Oh, that was nothing." Or we boomerang the compliment... "Oh, I love your hair." In place of all those words, smile at your complimenter.

For extra credit, every time you pass a mirror today, give yourself a wink and say, "I deserve the best compliments." So many of us think it's selfish or arrogant to let in praise and goodness. But the more we can receive, the more we can give.



## REFLECTIONS ON COMPLIMENTS

What came up for you around taking in compliments?

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Think back to a compliment that was meaningful to you — either from today or from any time in your past. Be in that moment right now. Where do you feel it in your body? Describe everything about the sensation. Is it full or light? Does it have a color? A temperature? So often, we shut this feeling down before we even get to register it. Take a few minutes to relish how a compliment *feels*.

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What is one way (or more) you could recognize one of those accomplishments for yourself?

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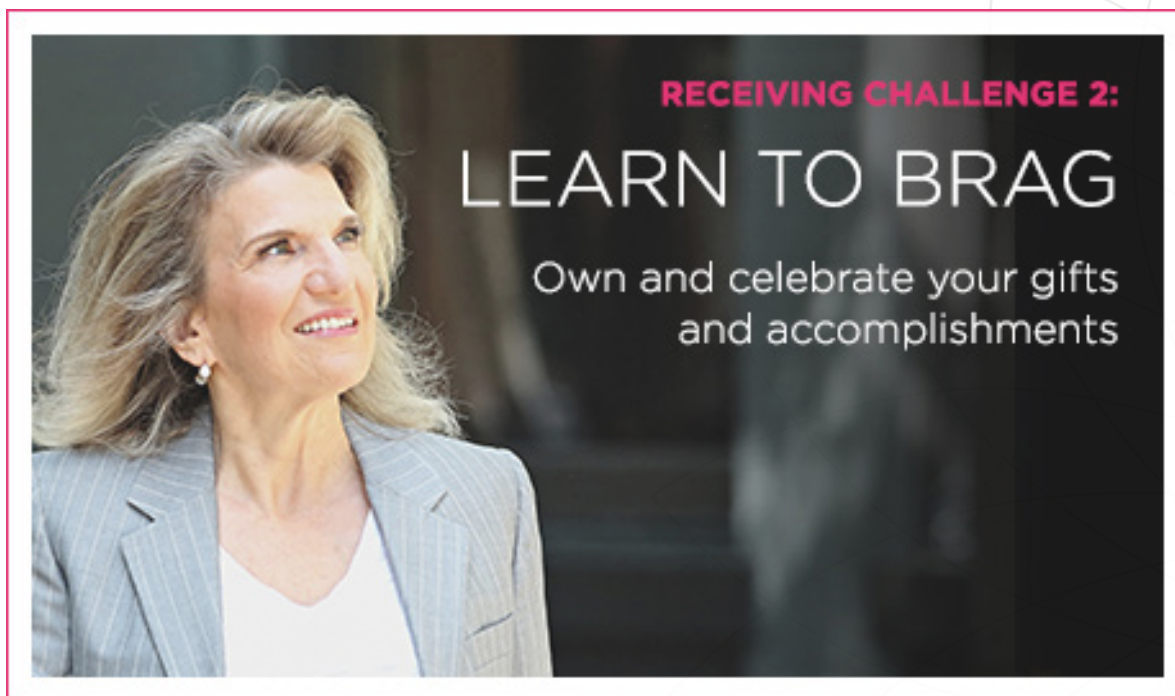
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Continue your practice of accepting compliments for each of the five days (and beyond).  
Now let's add in a second challenge...

## **CHALLENGE 2: SELF-CELEBRATE!**

Today, notice what you are already doing well and honor it fully ... by expressing it to a friend, writing it in a journal, acknowledging it quietly within yourself in the moment, or all of the above. To receive more, it's important to recognize, appreciate, and celebrate yourself. You will expand your own capacity for goodness (while showing others how you best like to be seen.).



## REFLECTIONS ON SELF-CELEBRATION

No one is going to see this but you (unless you want to show it off, which we fully support!). What are some things you've done that make you feel a little taller when you remember them? What are your proudest personal accomplishments?

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Make a list of all the things you're good at. Do you make a great apple pie? Are you a good friend? Do you build legal arguments so sharp they scare judges? Dish.

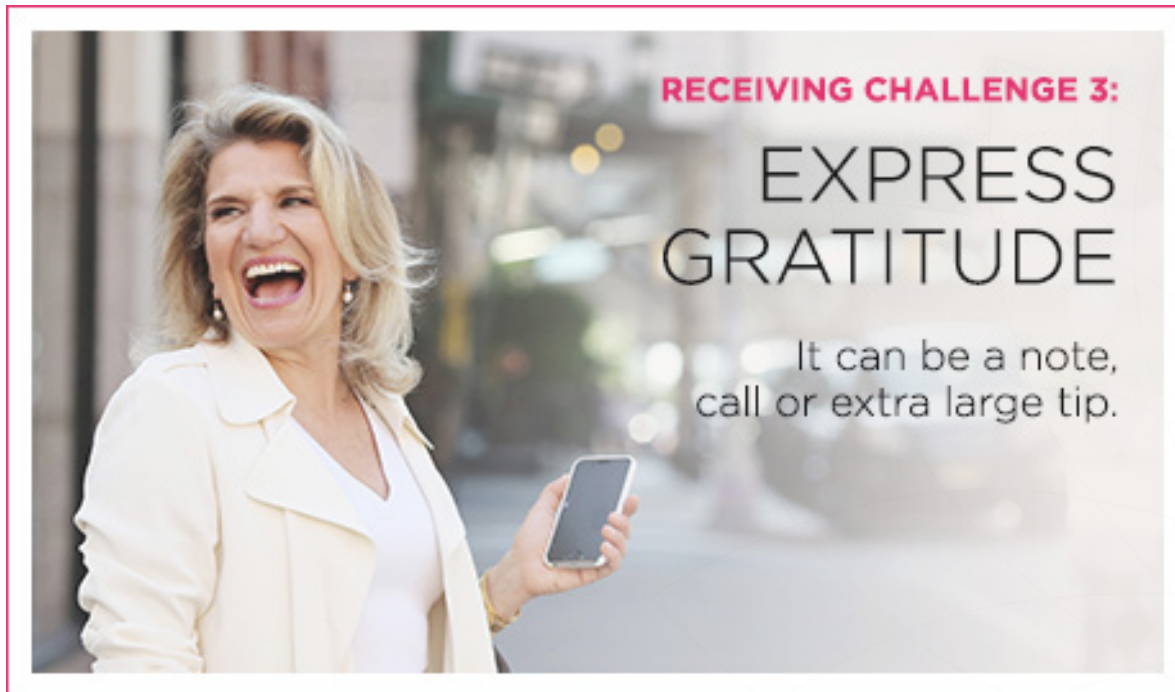
This image shows a blank sheet of white paper with horizontal blue or gray ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. In the upper right corner, there is a faint, light gray geometric pattern consisting of overlapping curved lines, possibly representing a stylized leaf or a decorative element. The overall appearance is that of a clean, unused piece of stationery.



Today's challenge is a little different. It's looking at receiving from the other side — appreciation.

## **CHALLENGE 3: EXPRESS GRATITUDE**

Find ways to express gratitude every day — it feels so, so good. Today, make a point to write a thank-you note, place a thank-you call, create a gratitude list, or leave an extra large tip to a server.



## REFLECTIONS ON GRATITUDE

What are 20 things you're grateful for right now?

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Giving might seem counterintuitive to a receiving challenge, but we aren't talking about self-sacrifice or martyrdom.

## **CHALLENGE 4: AN ACT OF ANONYMOUS GOOD**

Do an act of anonymous good. Take a bag when you walk on the beach or hike and pick up any trash along the way. Wipe that wet seat for the next lady in the ladies' room. Buy coffee for the person behind you in line. Deliver flowers to a retirement home or hospice. Reconnect with that part of you that's mischievous and playful and all heart.



## REFLECTIONS ON ANONYMOUS ACTS OF GOOD

Sometimes an opportunity to commit some good will present itself spontaneously, but it can be even more fun to plot your kindness. What are some anonymous acts of good you could do where you live in the next week? Use this space to brainstorm.

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Today's challenge is all about you and giving to yourself. Can you take it in?

### **CHALLENGE 5: RADICAL SELF-CARE**

Make self-pleasure and your self-care a daily practice, not a special treat. The more glorious care you take of yourself, the more glorious care you take of your body, the more the world can take glorious care of you. How can you practice radical self-care today?

Think beyond a bath. You might make a \$5 payment towards a debt that's worrying you. You might eat your lunch outside instead of at your desk. You might lightly fondle your breasts to release some mid-day oxytocin. You might give yourself a full-body massage with fragrant oils before bed. The ideas are endless.



## REFLECTIONS ON SELF-CARE

What are some regular activities in your life right now that lack joy or pleasure?

*(Paying bills? Doing school drop-off? Taking transit to work?...)*

This image shows a blank sheet of white paper with horizontal ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. On the right side, there are three faint, overlapping circular outlines, which appear to be part of a larger design or watermark. The circles are light gray and do not have solid fills.

For each, what is one thing you could do to expand your experience of pleasure?

*(Light a candle? Make a playlist of uplifting music?...)*

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## THIS IS A START

Five days isn't a long time, but it's enough to start a meaningful ripple. Have you noticed more positive attention coming to you, as you've paid it to yourself? Have you noticed you're just a little more comfortable taking a compliment or accepting an offer? Let's keep it going.


### Each day, as you can:

- ☐ Accept compliments with thanks (and compliment yourself)
- ☐ When you do something great, acknowledge it — tell a friend, tell yourself in your journal...
- ☐ Take time to express thankfulness (to loved ones, strangers, Goddess, ...)
- ☐ Do a small anonymous act of good for someone else
- ☐ Create at least one moment of pleasure for yourself

And in addition to all this, be aware of the expanding ripple. Be aware of the changes that come just from these small acts. Because they aren't small at all. When you practice receiving, you begin to live a more expansive life. And it affects everyone around you.

### Some ways to make these challenges a more permanent lifestyle:

- ☐ Carry a small notepad with you and make a quick note each time you do one of the challenges
- ☐ Use a smartphone app like Habit List or any other reminder tool and make daily to-dos
- ☐ Sticky notes! Put them on your mirror, on your computer screen, on the wall beside the light switch — anywhere you'll see them
- ☐ Tell friends what you're doing and invite them to participate; keep each other inspired with regular check-ins



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