

# sweet nectar

**THE 30 DAYS TO CHANGE BOOKLET**

By Kareem Taylor

Dedicated to anyone who makes art, anyone who makes stuff and  
anyone who should make a difference.

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1. Send this file to a friend.
2. Send them a link to [www.kareemtaylor.com/30DaysToChange](http://www.kareemtaylor.com/30DaysToChange) so they can download it themselves.
3. Visit [www.heartsconverse.com](http://www.heartsconverse.com) to read Natalegé Whaley's article.
4. Print out ten copies for your friends, co-workers and people you're on this journey with.

# WHAT IS SWEET NECTAR?

In its literal sense, sweet nectar is that little piece of goodness inside your favorite fruit.

In the sense of this work, sweet nectar is that little piece of goodness you taste after starting something. It's that blissful mood you're in after getting over the hump. It's satisfaction. It's what comes after you've made a difference, even just a little bit.

This manifesto, this entire challenge, the idea behind this work, is about getting to that good stuff, the sweet nectar.

# IS THIS FOR ME?

This is for millennials who want to get started. But if you don't have time to read it, even though it's really short, here's three things you'll get from it:

- 1) How to start today
- 2) How to fail (and keep going) and
- 3) How to get good at just about anything

You have an idea, you want to make it happen, you know it's what you should be doing, but you have yet to begin. You're stuck. It's not your fault, per se.

It's just that the rules have changed.

The “go to college, get a good job” journey is dead. Waiting to get picked, being valued at work and hoping for an opportunity is no longer a reality. The safety net is not safe and it’s shaken things up a bit.

But it’s also opened up a world of new possibility to those who refuse to wait any longer. As we see daily, jobs are being wiped out and computerized, thousands of people are being laid off and social security won’t be here for us in thirty years.

There’s a revolution happening.

With the internet, access to information and education at our fingertips, the economy is starting to reward those who know how to leverage it.

That means that in order to taste the sweet nectar, in today's economy, we must release our ideas into the world. Start that project. Found that new small business. We must do it ourselves. Today, it's the only way.

This manifesto won't help you get rich quick, and it won't offer you the grand answer to life. But after reading this, it's my hope that you'll get closer to doing more of the work you know you should be doing.

Most importantly — I hope you do something with this.



## THE POET

“What does it take to change?”, Julian asked me. I’d just finished speaking to his social studies class of about thirty students, all participating in their high school’s career day. “In what way?” I responded with curiosity.

Out of his backpack, he pulled out to show me a thick black and white composition notebook. “I’m a poet”, he explained. “Up until now I’ve kept it to myself but I really want to let people know that I write.”

The first thing that came to my mind was this: “Well, why don’t you create a blog?”

I was running off to speak to the next class but asked the student to email me.

The next day, there was an email from him telling me what had inspired him to write. We started an email chain talking about what he could do next, how he could set up a blog, how he could release a few pieces a month, how he could share it with his family and friends.

For a week, we went back and forth. Then, I went two months without hearing from him. Out of the blue, I received an email with a blog link. Julian had set up a blog filled with his poetry — and had people commenting on it.

He had the tools. He had the talent. He just needed to get over the hump. Since this, I've wanted to share the same advice, tips and sparks for my friends. How can we get closer to the real thing? Even if it's just a little bit?

This led to the 30 Days to Change campaign — an initiative I wanted to do with my friends.

On December 2nd, 2013, the campaign kicked off and eventually attracted dozens more outside of my network. Friends of friends, family of friends, joined in. After school programs, churches and people who had the tools but just needed to know how to leverage them, got involved.

The campaign ended December 31st just in time to launch into the new year. It taught us all one thing: Change starts now. Today. At this very moment.



## Day 1: PERSPECTIVE

What would happen if we changed our mind about how we see things?

## Day 2: YOU'RE NEVER QUALIFIED

How do we become qualified to make a difference?

Here's three ways:

**Start**, when you don't feel ready.

**Begin**, when you're unprepared.

**Release**, when you don't have all the answers.

## Day 3: WHEN TO QUIT

In order to focus more on the right things, sometimes, we must quit doing the wrong things.

Quit for something:

**Important, urgent and better.**

## Day 4: WHAT ARE YOU HERE TO DO?

Remove the title, remove the occupation. At the core, what is it that you do?

A great way to start is to ask ourselves:

**What difference do I want to make?**

**What do I have to say? and**

**Why is it worth anyone's time?**

## Day 5: WHAT'S YOUR CHECKLIST?

Apple, Starbucks and people who make stuff that matter have a checklist, a set of rules.

Does your project (or idea) stand firmly on a list of essentials? Is it:

**Original, consistent and weird.**

To name a few.

## Day 6: WHEN OUR PATTERN IS DISRUPTED

When we don't feel comfortable. When we're forced to develop new and better habits. When we fail (and it teaches us how to come back better). This is when we tap into something good and worth doing.

## Day 7: EXCUSES

The little voice inside that tell us:

- a) **There's not enough time**
- b) **No one will like it**
- c) **People will laugh at me**
- d) **It's embarrassing**
- e) **I'm not that good**

When we learn to anticipate A and F, we'll quit stalling and make stuff. It starts off small and then it turns into something we're proud to share.

## Day 8: FAILURE

How do we tap into doing more? How do we avoid being average? Fail, and fail again, and then return more intelligently with the thing that works. And then everyone calls it an overnight success. If you haven't failed lately, you have some work to do.

**Do it more often. It takes courage to put it out there and be criticized but it's the only way to make a difference.**

## Day 9: RESOURCES

Most times, in our own backyard, we have everything we need to get started.

- 1) **When you need help, ask.**
- 2) **When you need a favor, ask.**
- 3) **When it makes it better, collaborate.**
- 4) **Where you can give, always give.**

## Day 10: TODAY

We can wait, or we can start.

## Day 11: THREE RULES THAT HELP

- 1) **Follow up.** The best relationships form from genuine and consistent building.
- 2) **Keep your promise.** Say exactly what you mean and go through with it. Especially when you must make a good impression.
- 3) **Always make it better.** The next handshake, the next meeting, the next time to make a difference. Even if it's brief, make it worth everyone's time.

## Day 12: BELIEVING

When it's time to step out on faith and do it, you feel it.

It will feel uneasy. It will feel uncomfortable. But in this moment, it will speak to you (and you will hear it) in a way it'd never reached you before.

And all traces of doubt will fade.

**This is where you do. This is when you go. This is how it happens.**

## Day 13: PICK YOURSELF

How long will you wait to be picked by an organization? In 2014, for anyone who wants to lead and make a difference, you must choose yourself.

## Day 14: MAKE YOUR OWN HOURS

Make your own hours. It doesn't have to follow rules. It just has to get done. Go.  
Make something happen.

**Wake up earlier.**

**Stay up later.**

**Make your schedule.**

**Get more done.**

## Day 15: BE THAT SOMETHING

No qualifiers. No prerequisites. Just hunger to do more and be more.

**Don't aspire to be something. Be that something. Blog it. Film it. Gather.  
Teach. Do. More. Today. Now.**

## Day 16: PROGRESS

If you feel stuck, if you have fallen behind on this challenge, if you feel overwhelmed. Start small. Very small. So small. For starters? Write down the change you need to make happen. Even if it's just one thing.

It may be small, but every little bit counts toward the bigger picture.

- A) Focus on small goals.
- B) Acknowledge when you've done something, even if it's one small step.
- C) Consistency is key.

## Day 17: CHANGING, JUST A LITTLE BIT

Sometimes, it's the thing we're running away from that we should be doing.

**“The most important thing to remember is this: To be ready at any moment to give up what you are for what you might become.” — W.E.B. Du Bois**

## Day 18: WHAT IF YOU DON'T KNOW WHAT YOU'RE GOOD AT?

You haven't started because you're just not sure how to.

(See today's video)

## Day 19: STARTING OVER

Starting over. Sometimes, it's the only way to get back going. Recharge. Renew. Rethink. Go back to the drawing board.

When the old ways aren't working anymore:

- 1) Is there another way in?
- 2) Is there another way to do this?
- 3) Is there a better way to do this?

## Day 20: PREPARATION AND OPPORTUNITY

“To teach there comes in their lifetime a special moment when they are figuratively tapped on the shoulder and offered the chance to do a very special thing, unique to them and fitted to their talents. What a tragedy if that moment finds them unprepared or unqualified for that which could have been their finest hour.”

— Winston Churchill

## Day 21: THE ACHIEVEMENT BOX

Especially important to this generation in today's economy, success is dependent on these four degrees. The question to ask yourself is this: What am I willing to get better at?

**Gifts.** *You're born with.*

**Skills.** *You acquire.*

**Talent.** *Is practice.*

**Know-how.** *Is figuring out what to do with it all.*

## Day 22: PERSISTENCE

Have you tried it again?

Did you give it another shot?

Did you keep your promise?

## Day 23: DEVELOPING

If you want to get good at something, always be in development. What can you do today to get stronger?

Practice, rehearse and do it again.

## Day 24: BE GENEROUS

Contribute, provide, commit, give.

## Day 25: ONE MORE TIME

One more time. Going back to play ball isn't always easy but it's necessary. Continue focusing on what's next. Is it better? Is it bigger? Is it worth anyone's time?

This year, if you quit something to spend time on something more important you're headed in the right direction.

Now, what's next?

## Day 26: DO IT YOURSELF

That idea, blog, video, project, campaign, new opportunity, can be done with you getting started on it.

Take one step forward today. It may be scary, but getting over the hump is worth it.

## Day 27: SPEAK IT ENOUGH

There's a limit to the amount of talk you can do before people start tuning you out.

If you speak it enough, though, you'll become it. Not because of some magical force. But because your instinct will insist on it happening.

The challenge is taking it from speaking it and believing it, to doing it. It's not easy, but it's better than waiting forever.

## Day 28: CHECKPOINT

Twenty-eight days in — are you closer to the real thing? What change have you made? Did you move forward?

I'd love to hear your story, send me an email to [kt@kareemtaylor.com](mailto:kt@kareemtaylor.com).

## Day 29: 5 IMPORTANT QUESTIONS

What is success?

What does it mean for you?

Is that realistic?

How can you make it realistic?

How can you get closer?

## Day 30: THE 3 SECRETS TO A LIFE-CHANGING YEAR

Opportunity, seek it.

Paths, take it.

Adventure, do it.

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# THE NEXT BIG THING

Today will belong to those who aren't afraid to say: "Look. This is what I made." That's how we get to the sweet nectar. By putting it out there. Seeing what works. Making it better.

This is helpful for not just you, but the people around you. Your friends, your comrades, your team. Lead them by getting started.

Send me an email at [kt@kareemtaylor.com](mailto:kt@kareemtaylor.com) and let me know how it goes.