



I Dare Me: How I Rebooted and Recharged My Life by Doing Something New Every Day

Lu Ann Cahn

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Feeling stuck?

Veteran journalist and cancer survivor Lu Ann Cahn was feeling angry and frustrated. The economy was tanking. Her job was changing. In a word, she felt “stuck.”

Something had to change. Her daughter helped convince her to start a “Year of Firsts.” For the next 365 days, Cahn made a point of doing something she had never done before, every day. Before she knew it, her whole perspective on life had changed. In this inspiring book, Lu Ann recounts how a new “first” everyday brought excitement and wonder back into her world. And more than that, she helps readers see how they can do it too.

- Participate in a Polar Bear Plunge
- Speak to a complete stranger on the street
- Zip-line across a crocodile-infested Mexican lake
- Spend a day in a wheelchair
- Learn to Hula Hoop

I Dare Me: How I Rebooted and Recharged My Life by Doing Something New Every Day Details

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From Reader Review I Dare Me: How I Rebooted and Recharged My Life by Doing Something New Every Day for online ebook

Debbie says

Lu Ann Cahn was a 53 year old wife, mother and consummate professional reporter who survived breast cancer, kidney cancer which and was now facing an economy where her profession was changing. In spite of weathering all those storms she was not a happy life camper and at the urging of her worried daughter decided to do something about it. I Dare Me is the culmination of that decision a compilation of her year of firsts. Was it scary, you bet. Does she regret even the things she failed at, not a chance; in fact it was the failures she most reveled. It's a book full of not only the feats she accomplished but also a guide of how do to's for her readers. It's the kick in the butt some of us will need to finally try that challenge that's been hanging over our heads for as long as we can remember. For others it's the go-ahead that no you're not too, old, scared, shy, weak or any of those humiliating titles we put on ourselves. It's the in-your-face absolute truth that the biggest obstacle is ourselves.

Have you ever been in a rut, of course you have and you know what, as you get older those ruts could even possibly effect your health. So as you sit on the couch and read this consider Lu Ann Cahn's journey through her many trials in her personal and her professional life. She will inspire you to "do"; she will tell you "how-do", she will let you in on her secret fears and how illuminating it was to conquer them. I think the best quote in the book sums it all up when she says in the introduction "Firsts are the antidote for being stuck."

This is the perfect self-medicine for your own reading shelf, to go back to and get that kick every so often when you need it. It would also make the perfect gift for anyone your worried about who needs a little push themselves. But don't just give the book; share in the firsts with them too!

Lu Ann, thank you for sharing yourself with us for your year of firsts. I think you've just pushed me out of that easy chair, finally.

Amy Holiday says

This was a fun one. I know Lu Ann Cahn from the teevee, so when she was the keynote at the Philadelphia Writers' Conference in 2014, she was just as fun and energetic, and the challenge she took on was lots of fun too. So why not.

I liked how the book was organized, even if it took a chapter or two to figure out what was going on. She tied in a lot of her challenges to personal life experiences but also explained how to relate it to your own life. Definitely made a few notes. Fun, enthusiastic, carefree but poignant read.

Diane says

Great ideas for getting your life out of a rut. Trying new things, even small things, can help develop a new look on your life. Fun read.

Julie Bestry says

I'm a fan of books where the authors spend a year committing to a particular habit or hobby, like A.J. Jacobs has done. Lu Ann Cahn, a journalist, decided to work her way out of a rut by writing a blog about challenging herself to do something new every day for a year. But I think that's the problem. It feels like a blog.

Cahn has ample writing skills to pull related "first" experiences together -- firsts that bring good karma, firsts that overcome fears, firsts that update you and make you more modern, educational firsts, etc. But it still feels like she's taken a blog, sorted the best-of posts into ten themed chapters and added some sidebars with suggested "other" firsts and academic studies supporting the benefit of each type of "first." As a monthly feature in Oprah or Real Simple, it works. As a book, it just felt a little flat for me, and I wanted something a bit more fizzy.

This seems like a fine book to give as a gift to someone in a rut, or someone who likes self-help books.

Cynthia K says

This book inspired me to pay more attention when I do new things or "Firsts" as the author calls them. Reading through her examples of how she got unstuck by doing something new every day, I was reassured that I haven't been afraid to seek out novelty in life but that I could be more mindful of them. Cahn reminds us of the importance of seeking out first-time experiences in maintaining our emotional well-being. And she includes bits of research in sidebars to back up her personal anecdotes.

I admire that Cahn had suggestions for readers to use through the book. The cheapskate in me was hoping for more inexpensive and preferably free ideas.

Rather than present her own stories chronologically, she grouped the firsts by category. I thought that was a great approach.

Amy says

Inspiring start to the new year! Can't wait to try some of these "firsts." Truly enjoyable read.

Donna Eckert says

Enjoyable light-hearted read

I really enjoyed this book and feel motivated to get out and do something new! I've made my list of ideas for my own Firsts.

Verkizen says

I got a copy of this book through the Goodreads First Reads Giveaways. I finished it in about two days.

Usually I like to take my time reading non-fiction books. I'm typically a fiction reader, and I will breeze through novels without hardly breathing. But for some reason I had a hard time putting this one down.

I find it fascinating to think about how one small thing can change a life. I struggle with completing lengthy tasks. Picture of myself every day for 100 days? I think I made it to day 12. Write every day for a month? I'll make it to about day 13 or 14. Trying something new every day for year sounds just about impossible to me.

But Cahn writes in a way that makes it seem like a very achievable thing. She includes ideas that are simple. She talks about how some days she didn't feel like finding a First, but she did it anyway.

This would be a fantastic book for anyone who's feeling like their life is a little stale. Sure a lot of the tasks that Cahn completes wouldn't be reasonable for me. I'm a 23 year old who knows all about technology. I've never had a little black book in my life. I've used my iPhone calendar since I bought an iPhone. But I do still feel a little let down with my life at the moment. In fact, reading I Dare Me convinced me to say yes to an opportunity that I probably would have otherwise said no to. I'll get back to you with the results.

Cassandra says

Not great writing but very motivational. I love how the author decided that she needed to try something new every day, forcing herself out of her comfort zone to experience new things. It felt like Cahn is an extrovert, which probably makes some of these challenges easier. As an introvert with anxiety, I think some of these challenges would be extremely hard for me. But it's inspiring to try something new, even if I can't do anything as extreme as the author! Polar Bear Plunge? Uh uh! Public speaking? No way! But maybe I could zip-line!

Diane says

I cannot remember how I stumbled on this book, but I purchased the Kindle version for my iPad, as I thought there might be some fun ideas on how to find more meaning in my day-to-day activities and to just have more fun, in general. I didn't know anything about the author prior to purchasing this book, and it is the first time I've ever read a book like this. I ended up reading it over the course of a couple weeks, reading a few entries here and there. Had I sat down to read it all at once, I'm sure it would've been a 1-day read.

Overall, I thought the book was good - not great - but good. She had some interesting "firsts" and accompanying perspectives, and I actually got an idea or two on things I can do, or at least consider doing. She also tried to sprinkle the entries with studies/research to support her conclusions, and also suggestions on things the reader could do if her "first" didn't appeal, or was something the reader had already done.

Honestly, some of the "firsts" were pretty silly, and she admits as much. I found it difficult at times to believe she had any epiphany at all in doing things like smoking a cigar, but she insists she did. Some of the "lessons learned" seemed somewhat disingenuous and felt like she was just trying to tell us what the lessons

"should" be, rather than anything she truly experienced. Perhaps that's the jaded side of me, I don't know.

I also found the various sections a bit disjointed, as she broke down the entries into chapters such as, "Firsts in Class: Learning Firsts" and "The Weird the Wacky: Firsts You Probably Won't Do Again." I don't exactly have a suggestion for better organization, but I think I would have preferred something chronological, perhaps even going into more depth regarding how she chose the firsts, and which ones had no impact on her at all.

In the end, it felt like more of a blog than a book, and it wasn't exactly life-altering. It was well-written and generally fun to read, but nothing I would end up buying for friends as a Christmas gift. I will likely take some of it to heart and try some "firsts" of my own, which is why I think it merits 3 stars.

Nicholas says

This was the first book I received through the Goodreads First Reads program. While definitely outside my preferred genre, I was intrigued by the title and had a personal connection since I once tried something similar myself.

First the good news. However you ultimately feel about this book, you can't help but admire the author's perseverance. Few who have suffered as she has, surviving separate bouts of colon and breast cancer, could manage to maintain such a positive attitude. The idea of her "try something new every day" challenge is daunting and requires more commitment than most of us could ever imagine. I know - I tried and failed several years ago.

I enjoyed reading about some of the challenges and particularly enjoyed the blurbs at the end of each section, offering medical/scientific validation of her considerable anecdotal evidence.

On the down side, the book is fluffy and rah-rah to the point of distraction. Although some must have been life changing, none of her challenges are addressed in more than a superficial manner. I wanted more depth.

I also thought the book suffered through lack of chronological presentation. This would have been a much more powerful story if we saw the ups and downs as they occurred throughout the year. How did the challenge evolve over time? Her attempts to present this thematically were quite weak.

To be fair, I visited her blog and found that it contained much of what the book lacked.

In the end this was a great personal triumph for the author, an entertaining blog, and a book with unfulfilled promise.

Please check out my other reviews at: <http://alexandriaredux.blogspot.com/>

Suzanne says

I don't think I've ever felt so inspired by a self-help book. I have taken on my own "Year of Firsts" and am

already feeling a tremendous shift in energy and life outlook!

For the first week I dared myself to -

Put red highlights in my (blonde) hair

Eat a philly cheese steak sub at Penn Station (because I always order the pizza sub)

Reach out to an instructor at my gym for time to discuss my wellness plans

Buy valentine treats for my co-workers

Meetup with a group of hikers from the American Walkers Assoc. for a 4-mile hike

Request an informational interview at a company I've been researching

Tomorrow I'm having Vietnamese food for the first time

Ms. Cahn states in her book that the more she shared her Year of Firsts idea with others, the more ideas were generated from friends, family, co-workers, and strangers reading her blog. I have found this to be the case. I now have "dates" to get a small tattoo, ride a Segway, go to an "Escape" house where you're locked in a room and have to solve puzzles and clues to get out (never had heard of this!), and play laser tag!

The novelty of this, accomplishing some smaller dares, has given me the courage to start taking on some 'bigger' dares that I've contemplated before but not had the courage to do. For me, these are the things like asking for an interview, submitting my writing for publication, etc.

Thank you Lu Ann Cahn for sharing your brilliant experience!!

OpenBookSociety.com says

<http://openbooksociety.com/article/i-...>

Brought to you by OBS reviewer Sammy

This is an easy read, in some ways simplistic. The writing style flows well and you can follow everything the author is trying to say. I'm so very happy that the author is a cancer survivor!

I found the premise of this book to be fascinating and felt that it would have some interesting insights, in a different way than some of the others in this genre have been dishing out. Like taking off 6 months or more and travel around to find yourself... So many people are unable to do those kinds of things. With that said, I was a bit disappointed with some of the ideas, but as it's not my journey I am trying to hold back. I don't want to sound snarky, but I think that my feelings I share next will. It's all perspective so bear with me.

Some firsts:

"Go to the Movies by Myself: Day 30", seriously a lot of people do this regularly, I will be going tomorrow, yes by myself. The author feels proud of herself...??? for that??? why??? Because she has the ability and money to go and see a movie, with no worries other than that you are there alone. Again, why? Keep in mind this is early in the book.

"Spend a day in a Wheelchair: Day 208", each first has a quote that goes with it some great ones are in this

book. For this one it is...

“The only disability in life is a bad attitude. ~Scott Hamilton”

Now this quote is lovely but in the real life of disabilities it's a little bit of a platitude. It's always sunny type of statement. Even with that this chapter was one of the best of the whole book and the things the author suggest at the end of it are awesome. We should do this with kids at all of our schools, because in real life this can be anyone, one bad fall and anyone can be in a wheelchair or have a disability. Hopefully it will make people more aware of how they are treating others.

“Just say “Yes”,

Didn't we just go through a time trying to teach women to say no because they have too much on their plates?

“All you have to do is get there, take it in, and experience it.” Buddhism anyone?

“Bake and Decorate a Cake from Scratch: Day 277”

Like that's never been done before, I just thought it was funny and ironic.

My biggest issue with this book, is that so many of the “firsts” cost money, oh the author says do little things that don't cost a lot of money, but here is a list of some of her ideas.

“Eat at the most exotic restaurant in your area.”

”Go to the Farmers' market... “

“Enroll in a class... “

“Learn a new language. “

“Take a day trip... “

“For once, let your hairdresser do whatever he or she wants.”

“Get a real makeup lesson with a professional makeup artist.”

“Downsize. Try a tablet computer.”

“Make a bid in an online auction.”

Some of things cost big bucks!!!! Some of the things many of us don't have, computer, hairdresser, vehicle for a day trip.

Saying all this, doesn't mean the book didn't have some very interesting ideas for everyone. Take time and do things for yourself. Find ways to live in the moment and give back, all very important things to help women (people) be the best they can be.

I recommend this for people who enjoy looking at how other people live and what they are trying to learn

about themselves.

Haverford Township says

Light-hearted read about making time to do a lot of "firsts." LuAnn chronicles her year of "firsts." Reading this inspires you to be more adventurous. Alice

Carol says

The book that changed my life! 2015 I turned 55 and challenged myself to do 55 new and/or challenging things. Best year ever!
