



# The Twentysomething Guide to Getting It Together: A Step-by-Step Plan for Surviving Your Quarterlife Crisis

*Mary Traina*

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## **The Twentysomething Guide to Getting It Together: A Step-by-Step Plan for Surviving Your Quarterlife Crisis** Mary Traina

Your guide to making it as a real-life grownup!

Like a lot of people, author Mary Traina spent her early twenties making a mess out of her life--until she realized it was time to toss the red Solo cups and finally grow up. In "The Twentysomething Guide to Getting It Together," she teaches you how to bust out of your rut with practical advice for kicking your bad habits, taking action toward your goals, and moving on to the next stage of your life as an adult. From answering tough relationship questions to advancing your career, she'll tackle all your biggest issues as well as give you a step-by-step plan for getting through your twenties in one piece.

Through Traina's signature humor, research, and real-world tips, this groundbreaking guide shows you how to:

Date a real man.

Escape entry-level hell.

Stop binge-drinking and overeating.

Emerge from a mountain of debt.

Cut those toxic friends of convenience.

With the same hip pop-culture references and endless wit that landed her a regular column on Zooey Deschanel's website, Mary Traina makes getting life together fun, easy, and--gasp--the cool thing to do!

## **The Twentysomething Guide to Getting It Together: A Step-by-Step Plan for Surviving Your Quarterlife Crisis Details**

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## **From Reader Review The Twentysomething Guide to Getting It Together: A Step-by-Step Plan for Surviving Your Quarterlife Crisis for online ebook**

### **Steven Lee says**

A friend gifted me this book for a recent birthday. I think she intended it mostly as a gag gift, but perhaps there was some knowledge inside that I could glean. I have made a commitment to read every book that I own and so this book entered into my reading list.

I am not the intended audience of this book. I am not sure if that means my opinion is relevant or not. I do not generally read self-help books, which is perhaps what this book should be considered. More specifically though Mary Traina is writing with a very specific type of reader in mind, one much like herself. This reader is a woman who is straight, educated, single, monogamous, employed, employed in her field, and living independently. This is a broad swath of the population, obviously, and I can check some of these boxes, but as you include some of these fields and not other the problems a person faces becomes very different.

I would say that the book opens with excellent generic advice. Traina focuses on things like goal setting, positivity, and taking realistic stock of one's life. This, I believe, is universal, or at least helpful for many millennials likely to read the book. People are unlikely to feel better about themselves if they feel sorry for themselves and aimlessly just hope things improve.

I think the main problem I have with the book is how it addresses the topic of relationships and employment. The advice is catered for the problems women have in dating in North America. It did not reflect my experience as a hetero man, but I suppose that is to be expected. The employment issue was far more problematic to me. I have many friends, far too many, who are underemployed outside of their field that wanted to work. Traina ignores this problem entirely. She writes as though the reader is an entry-level employee in her dream industry/company and just needs to show enough moxie to move up in the world. Given that underemployment is my bane I found it a frustrating section.

I am not the proper audience for this book, and I have to imagine that some young women (and men) would take a lot from it. The first few chapters provide generally good advice to anyone, of any age. Perhaps others should put aside the book at the end, or in areas where it really doesn't apply to them.

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### **Brianna Tuohy says**

I chose this book after spending a day looking for a self help book that wasn't lame, or overly optimistic, or babying. I thought this one fit the bill, but I was v wrong. It just does not ring true at all and all of the little jokes she made really hit way off the mark. There were some times when the writing seemed genuine, and helpful, but a lot of it felt disorganised and forced. Examples:

-Idk if it's just me, but the key references to adjustment to the life of a 20 year old being 'that Seinfeld episode where a fire alarm goes off' and 'my super sweet sixteen' was a super weird and off-putting combo which pretty accurate as to how it ended up for the rest of the book. Also 'spending 45 minutes reading about Liza minnelli on Wikipedia' is probs not how anyone procrastinates in real life, neither is playing animal crossing, or trying to convince people I was abducted by aliens. I just feel like the author is talking about some quirky fictional girl that is not her or anyone she knows??

-for a step-by-step guide, there aren't many steps. I kept looking for where the book was going to actually begin. I thought maybe after part 1 'getting ready to get it together' - which can be summarised as- have balance, be responsible, explore your interests, plan, be honest about your emotions and work towards your future- there would be some practical steps ? Nah, just randomly assorted tips like call your mum and don't hook up with your coworkers. I feel like there is good info there, but it seems like nothing because there is very little structure apart from general chapter themes, it's like Mary just wrote obvious tips down as she thought of them and forced herself to write at least half a page on each one.

-all of the case studies seem to come from people who are just mildly bored and not struggling from a crisis at all-my friends all wake up early now! Yay! These two girls went on a holiday and now feel refreshed! Hooray! Good on Max for always dancing at parties. Just feels like filler ya feel? These people seem like caricatures without any realness to them

-the fact that you would reference BuzzFeed articles for further life advice really says it all

-twentysomething fact ish seems to be the designated humor section and I just don't care about fictional men on planes who enjoy your lumbar pillow and choice of Diane Keaton movies (haha you're being sarcastic and self deprecating!). Or how woody and buzz were enemies in real life (lol because it's an animated film) SO FORCED.

- I just don't even know how any real advice can be pulled out of this for the target audience. If you're having a crisis, it's not about superfoods, a pay rise, overcoming tomorrow, not dating shit boys, and a good mattress. Seeing a therapist was literally mentioned one time, and self care very little. I feel like this was written without thinking about how twenty something's actually think and do life, and was written retrospectively for teenagers to get a sense of one kind of twenties life- the office job and packed lunches and not much else kinda life

-there was one good section about good stuff for people in their twenties to buy because it's actually specific info that can be used practically in life, rather than abstract ideas that sound nice but mean nothing new.

I feel like the info is useful, just not to me or any twenty something's I know. Maybe I would have liked this in high school.

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## **Shanu says**

Summary and key ideas :

### **CHAPTER 1: fix the things you've been doing wrong**

#### **• ATTITUDE ADJUSTEMENT :**

- focus on long term
- negate FOMO by making time for yourself, don't put too much importance in social media
- balance your life
- negate naivety by following your gut and taking risks

#### **• MOTIVATION TO MAKE THE CHANGES :**

- reward yourself
- rely on your friends/ find mentors and copy cat them
- find your passion (do things alone/outside your comfort zone)
- have a long term goal, take responsibilities and don't procrastinate

- change your surroundings to get inspired, take vacations
- go big or go home (don't make small changes, shake things up through and through)

### **CHAPTER 2: Strategy: Making Space in Your life**

- **MAKE TIME**, stop that "I'm just so busy..." crap :
  - don't waste time on irrelevant stuff (snooze, mindless websurfing, stalking your ex on FB, ...)
  - get a planner for your week's appointments, deadlines, social events, your shopping list and your cash flow (did that refund come in? was I debited for that thing already? Did I save up enough for that trip?), work out log.
  - Avoid procrastination : don't be afraid of failure (stay positive), overcome the laziness of putting effort (use momentum), build new habits
- **UNCLUTTER YOUR MIND** :
  - take some quiet time (forget your emails for a day)
  - share your thoughts, forgive (others AND YOURSELF), dissect and resolve your anger
  - think about therapy if you're struggling

### **CHAPTER 3: career**

- early career problems :
  - poor life/work ratio ? don't kill yourself at work, sleep, keep in touch with friends outside of coworkers, have some family time
  - think long term, think of others as part of your team, find a mentor
  - don't over indulge in complaining : be a problem solver or maybe... get a new job
  - don't compare yourself to other (don't be jealous of their success) and accept your own challenges
  - avoid gossiping
- build your career :
  - be involved in various things
  - put yourself out there
  - build leverage before asking for a promotion or a raise
  - if you must leave... leave on good terms.

### **CHAPTER 4: body**

- don't focus on having a cover model body. Don't wait to have a "perfect" body to have confidence
- Make a doctor appointment and look for ways to cover your medical expenses
- Have a balanced diet : protein, fat, carbs, fiber, water. Track your diet (but don't over do it). Do some small things to improve your diet (no soda, no sugar, no eating out...). Treat yourself.
- Work out : cardio, weight train, stretch, stay motivated for a month, then you'll get addicted.
- Buy good shoes, SPF cream, a good neck pillow and mattress, a food steamer, ... : **SPLURGE ON YOURSELF**
- Sleep ++

### **CHAPTER 5: relationship**

- It's not all about your partner and what they like about yourself
- Don't be afraid of being picky, of disagreeing with a potential partner, accept that some people won't be a fit for you just as you won't be a fit for some, don't dwell on the past or build up walls because of fear, keep your friendship and let them have theirs, let them treat you and treat them
- Commitment :
  - o Allow personal growth : People don't make each other happy; you have to make yourself happy and bring that positivity back to your relationship
  - o Accept to compromise, expect your partner to do so as well

- o Shake up the routine and evolve with your partner (don't be in a stagnant relationship)
- o Don't take each other for granted (thank them, apologize) and communicate
- o Take it slow
- o accept their past relationships
- break up : sometimes you just gotta do it

### **CHAPTER 6: friendship**

- careful pick people before letting them in your circle. If they give you a bad vibe, they're not right for you.
- Don't take your friend for granted : spend one on one time with them, let them be themselves, be there for them,...
- Socialize in other ways than drinking
- accept to let go without being bitter about it
- don't throw a fit if they have a new significant other, don't forget about them if you have a new SO
- frenemies can be a good challenge but learn when to not let it destroy your self worth/confidence
- learn to stay out of social media drama

### **CHAPTER 7: Debt**

- be broke in your 20s (yes that new couch you want can wait).
- Don't misread your paycheck (TAXES)
- Once you know how much you actually have every month : Break down where it goes (bills, food/supplies, social/ATM, splurges, savings) and adjust your spending.
- Cancel those dumb subscriptions, be aware of bank fees, limit impulse buys
- Live on budget, be on the look out for promotions and coupons, be smart when paying for vacations, buying groceries, clothes and going to social events.

### **MY THOUGHTS :**

- lots of main ideas followed by long chapter clumsily explaining that one point.
- super annoying writing style, sounds like that one friend who thinks she has everything figured out in her life because she has a new umbrella and a sorted up to do list
- many "twenty something factish" that made me roll my eyes. No they aren't funny. Stop trying.
- "pro tips" and "things to remember" as if you're reading quick notes for your next test at school. We got it the first time, really, don't need to overkill it.
- globally useless, unless you left your parents home at 16 and didn't ever have any guidance in your life ("don't be afraid not to go to every single party!", "make time for yourself"... I mean... was a book with this type of advice really necessary?)
- I don't think this is meant for 20 somethings, because we already figured all the things in this book. I feel like this is most aimed at 16-18 who're fresh out of high school and need some tips about what an "adult" feels like, but from the point of view of an actual 20something, not from the point of view of someone who's 50-60 yo.
- "real life survival stories" apartés that are too good to be true.
- "Finding the time and energy to make change in your life will help you get in shape, out of debt, and even get a promotion, sure; but, most importantly, it will help you think about your own needs and fill you with the confidence you need to become a successful and fulfilled adult." Lots of words, but feels like empty calories.
- "A lot of young women go wrong in their early twenties because they are focused more on convincing men that they are special rather than taking the time to figure out whether or not that guy is special enough for them" loved this quote.

### **My top 5 advice :**

- teach yourself. read a lot about everything that stressed you out, things you don't know, things that you

need to learn. teach yourself how to fix things. use all resources available. openly ask for advice, tell people you don't know. . be willing to learn even when you're 31.

-it's not that serious. it won't kill you. stop the drama. unclench.

-MONEY. Rule it or it will ruin you. How much comes in? how much goes out? how much do you NEED? how much can you save?

-don't clutter your house. Just don't. don't buy crap to make you feel better.

-don't compare yourself to anyone IRL or in social media. do your thing, in your own term, at your own pace.

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## **Mallika S says**

I found some chapters in this book really insightful and upfront. Other chapters didn't really apply to me like the finance as perf or debt because I have that under control. It's mostly my love life and my friendships that are the real problem areas for me. It did help shed light on those areas so I would recommend it.

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## **Sarah Reicker says**

Pretty funny read, but don't bother reading unless you are a straight, American woman. Still, some good insights on dating, getting healthy, and balancing work and life. I found the section on debt and money management particularly helpful.

Unlike other self help books, this book is basically like: were you a piece of shit in your early 20s? Well, now it's time to own up. I like that, I feel like too many books make you feel like everything is fine. This book is more like, everything WILL be fine once you take responsibility and work hard/sacrifice to reach your goals. It's funny enough to make the boring stuff worth reading.

Ultimately this book was a good read because it made me feel less alone as being a kind of shitty 20 something .

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## **Kelcie Hollingsworth says**

On the bright side, this book is a light and quick read. You can skim without feeling like you've missed anything. That said, the content is mostly common knowledge and nothing special.

On the down side, the jokes sometimes feel forced, and the "trendy" words tossed in can make the writing feel clunky and awkward. The author's attempt at quirky can from time to time go overboard and cause chronic eye rolling.

There were times when I had to put the book down simply because the writing seemed to be trying so desperately to be "cool" and relevant that I felt uncomfortable reading it. It was like watching an older relative get drunk and have a mid-life crisis, and I don't know of anyone who wants that from a book.

If you still want to give it a try, go for it; it's quick and easy to breeze through. But if you don't read it, you're not going to be missing anything.

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## Francine Derby says

A fairly quick (222 pages) read with a lot of value. The author gave sound, relevant and humorous advice on a lot of issues facing persons in this age group. Issues such as money management and getting out of debt, achieving career goals, dating and long term relationships, choosing friends wisely, health insurance, thinking about retirement, eating healthily and exercising on a budget and much more. I absolutely loved it and would recommend it for anyone looking for a "guide to adulthood."

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## Sara says

I'm currently 25 and I was curious about this book because I think it's time to get my life together.

This book didn't have any earth-shattering revelations but it did help put things into perspective. It's *okay* that I don't have my life totally figured out, and there are little tips that are helpful and some stories that are funny and insightful that help break up how-to-ness of it.

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## Elina says

I got this as a present from a dear friend in the time where it seemed that everything will just go downfall. I am not a person who reads self-help books, but at that point it seemed like a spot-on present. The book is really youthful and presents hilarious concepts of how things go horribly wrong. I did not read it in one day, not one week ..nor one month. It took me about 1,5 years to finish it up. I think I read it in the breaks between other books, when you still live in the just read book, but don't dare to start a new one yet. I can not say it's the worst book in the history, but also not the best. It's good to have in your shelf when you lose motivation or just need to read in between.

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## Courtney Bowling says

A lot of the advice is kind of tired and rehashed. It feels like it was written for a very specific kind of girl - college-educated, middle to upper-middle-class big city dweller with an office job, who goes out a lot. I don't have an office job, so the section about work life was almost wholly irrelevant to me. It steered completely clear of all discussion about income inequality, and therefore it kinda felt like the author was one of those people assuming I'm broke because of all the avocado toast I'm supposedly eating. It was weird that the author never mentioned thrifting, consignment shops, or discount clothing stores in the section about style, just the same tired advice about "buy expensive key pieces and supplement with fast-fashion stores". I would have liked to have seen an expanded self-care section - tips on finding a good moisturizer, how to avoid split ends, more stuff about therapy or reaching out when you think you might be depressed, etc. With that being said, the book did have some good advice and explanations of how insurance and things like that work.

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## Stacy says

I gave it three stars, but it's really teetering between 3 and 3.5

I found the author's voice to be funny and for the most part, delightful to read. (I can almost always count to be entertained if the author of a book on a serious-ish topic can find a writing voice that sounds more like a conversation than a lecture)

Overall, I found some helpful tips for budgeting and stuff, so yeah, I liked it well enough to give it a neutral-to-like rating

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## Jerrika says

Advice in this book was pretty obvious, but written in sort of a fun way. I think I thought it would be presented as more of a narrative but really gets to the point, which I can respect. Good book to read on a commute for some nice advice and a couple of laughs.

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## Jade says

For a self-help book, it didn't tell me anything I didn't already know...

This book assumed that most, if not all, 20-somethings suffering from a 'quarterlife crisis' go through more or less the same situation - eating badly, dating the wrong people, not being assertive or efficient enough at work, and focusing on the wrong priorities (FOMO) etc... Best (or worst, depends how you see it) of all, it even suggests you to go "see a therapist if you're struggling".

The only saving grace was that it was light hearted and easy reading - took me less than half an hour to go from cover to cover and realise it's not helping.

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## Hedda says

Reading this book kinda felt like a waste of time. Sure, there are some fun stories and some useful tips (hence the three stars), but overall, I don't think this is a must-read for 20-somethings, not even close. So many of the things the author wrote about were unnecessary. Things that everyone knows and that have no need for elaboration. It dragged on for so long. I honestly skipped paragraphs because I already knew what was coming, and knew I wouldn't learn anything new from it. I think the beginning is okay, but like I said, it just drags on and it gets really dull.

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## Rachel Skye says

I went back and forth between liking this book and being a little... bored? I am currently 24, and I find myself already surpassing most of these "crises" prior to even being close to 30; she seems to aim the book closer to the later 20's. I think there are a few important things to make from this, but it really wasn't

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anything that I didn't know.

It was light and easy read. I read over a longer period because I would find myself being too bored and then would want to skip pages where I already have reflected on prior to reading.

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