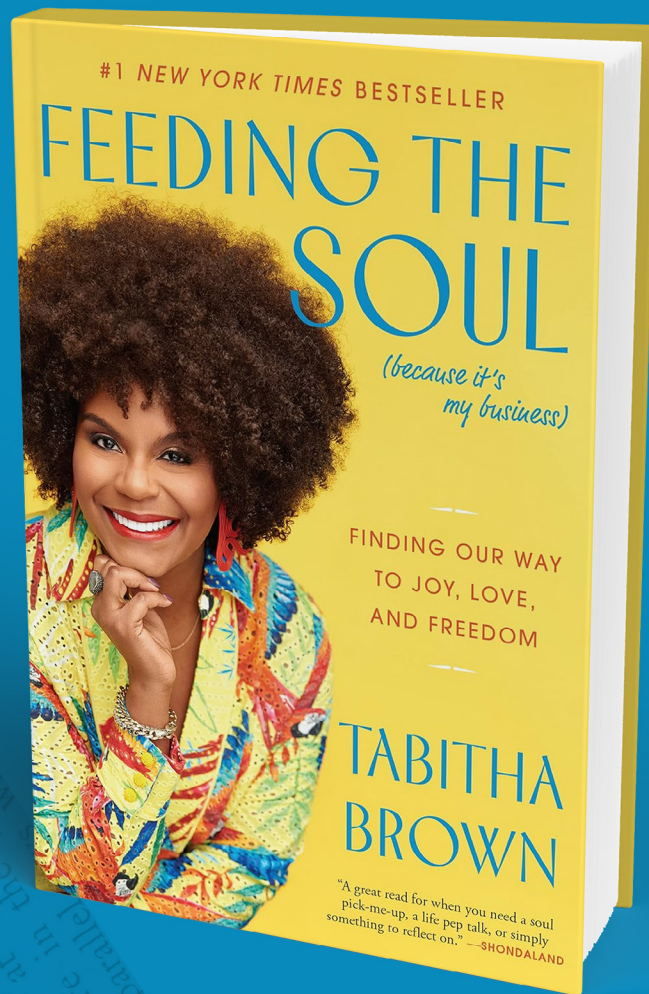


# BOOK SUMMARY



## FEEDING THE SOUL TABITHA BROWN



# DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

## **Book Themes and Summary**

### **BOOK THEMES**

#### That's Your Business

How is destiny like a pair of glasses? Everybody has their own prescription.

Some people are near-sighted, some far-sighted; some have a lazy eye. If you try to wear somebody else's glasses – or foist your glasses on them – don't be surprised if it doesn't help much. Why? Because your prescription belongs to you and you alone.

So it is with our visions for life. Each is unique. We each have a unique journey to embark on, and it's up to us, alone, to take it. As Tab says, "That's your business."

One part of "your business" has to do with your gifts. Each of us has a unique set. Some of us can paint beautiful paintings that bring people to tears. Some of us are born athletes. Those gifts are obvious. But some of us – many of us – have gifts we hardly recognize.

Tab spent years trying to realize her dreams as an actress. She took part in community theater, worked in independent films, and even hosted a small late-night show. Struggling in her career, she tried to fit into the image that Hollywood wanted – changing how she dressed, how she talked, and even taking diet pills to try to force her body into the "right" shape. It was exhausting – and, what's more, it didn't work!

In the end, what propelled her to fame were two gifts that she hadn't even considered. The first gift was that Tab was always funny. As a child, she'd crack her family up with her observations and comic timing. She relished big gatherings and social occasions where she could play the part of the family joker.

The second gift was her love of cooking. Throughout her life, while she was out there trying to become a famous actress, she was also going about the quiet, mundane business of daily living. Cooking was always there, but it was effortless – just a normal part of everyday life, as natural as breathing.

And yet it was these two unassuming gifts – her sense of humor and her love of cooking – that would transform her life. Only in retrospect could she see how valuable these gifts were.



# DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Today, far from seeing them as mere quirks of personality, Tab sees these gifts as just that — actual, genuine gifts from God. God gives all of us these gifts for a reason. We owe it to Him and ourselves not to take them for granted, but instead to put them to the best use we can. So ask yourself: What are your gifts? What comes naturally to you? Do you have abilities that you aren't taking advantage of?

And remember, if somebody doesn't see your gift, don't get mad about it. Your prescription — your vision — is yours. It's not their job to believe in you — it's yours! Once again: "that's your business."

## **LESSONS FROM DONNA**

Let's take a moment to hear from somebody close to Tab — very close. Her name is Donna. Donna is obsessed with growth. Donna knows you can never stop growing. And to keep growing, sometimes you have to shed some things you once were attached to.

Who is Donna? If you're a fan, you already know: Donna is Tabitha's hair!

Hair sheds naturally. It comes up, fulfills its purpose, and then leaves you. Likewise, some people in life are going to drift away. That's perfectly okay.

Other people in life may try to take advantage of you. To keep growing, you can't keep these people around. You've got to resist being a people-pleaser and maintain healthy boundaries. There's a time and a season for everything and everybody. If someone can't respect you, then you may have to — gently and kindly — let them go.

If a hair falls out of your head, there's no use trying to stick it back on. The same goes for unhelpful or limiting beliefs. Tab had to go through the process of shedding layers — aspects of her personality that weren't authentic, and were based on fear and the desire to be validated.

In the process of struggling to be an actress, and in working day jobs in corporate America, Tab had gradually taken on certain beliefs — beliefs about how she should act, dress, and speak. People told her she'd need to "fix" her accent. This would continue when she started posting online videos, where she received hurtful and racist comments from viewers demanding she talk "proper." For years, she tried to meet these expectations, contorting her speech and self-presentation in the hopes of being accepted.



# DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

But eventually, Tab began to feel that she was doing a disservice to those she loved: her parents, grandparents, and others who came from where she came from, and spoke the way she spoke. For their sake and for hers, she wanted to be free. So, like Donna, Tab did some shedding. She let these false parts of her persona go – in her words, “peeling off the layers and getting back to the core” of who she really was.

Ask yourself: Are there parts of your personality, your sense of self, that are no longer serving you? Or perhaps never did? Everybody deserves to be free – to live an authentic life. When you do, you’ll find yourself growing in ways you never imagined.

## **“ARE WE THERE YET?” TAB’S LONG ROAD TO SUCCESS**

Tab has found enormous success in life; so many of her dreams have come true. She has over ten million followers on TikTok, Instagram, and Facebook. She’s had two television shows (“All Love” on the Ellen Digital Network and “Tab Time” on YouTube.) She is a prominent Black voice in the wellness community. She has informed and inspired millions.

But she hasn’t had an easy road. The road’s been long, winding, full of deep potholes and imposing roadblocks. It’s a journey that’s lasted 23 long years.

Getting to her destination took two things: first, she had to persist – to get moving, even when life halted her and stole her momentum. And second, she had to heed the signage on the road – recognize the signs that showed her the right path. Keep both lessons in mind as we look at her story.

Tabitha Bonita Brown (née Thomas) was born on February 4, 1979, in Eden, North Carolina. From childhood, she loved acting, and participated in theater productions throughout school. Her mother encouraged her to study something more practical, so she briefly enrolled in a program for fashion design. But within months a voice inside her told her, You should be acting. She left the fashion program, but could no longer afford the tuition to study acting.

Determined to at least get closer to Hollywood, she moved to Orange County, California and worked two jobs, crammed into a small apartment with extended family.

She and her now-husband Chance were at the early stages of their relationship. He



# DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

convinced her to move back to North Carolina, temporarily, to save money. There the two married, found steady jobs, and had a daughter, Choyce. Tab gradually started to become resigned to this new life. She simply had too many responsibilities now to pursue her dream.

Until, that is, she received a powerful sign. One morning, lying in bed, she was startled to feel the room shake violently. Then she heard a deep, powerful voice giving her a message: God had chosen another life for her. She was supposed to be an actor.

Tab did her best to obey: she took part in local TV programs, short films, and theater. But all of this only sharpened her appetite. She realized she had to go back to California. In 2004, five years after she'd first come home, Tab finally set out again, this time with husband and daughter in tow.

She'd found her way back to the path, and was more determined than ever to follow it. But it was about to take its sharpest and most harrowing turn yet.

## **FORKS IN THE ROAD**

Sometimes in life we face trials – challenges like we've never experienced before.

No sooner had Tab returned to California than her mother became ill back home. Soon she received a diagnosis that was terminal – ALS, otherwise known as Lou Gehrig's disease. Tab began flying back and forth between California and North Carolina so she could spend precious time with her mother and help the family care for her.

After her mother's death in 2007, Tab threw herself into acting. She took every gig she could get – even unpaid ones. But her career wasn't taking off. In 2012, she took some time off to have her and Chance's second child, her son Queston. Afterwards, she once again pursued acting work – but it wasn't working out as she'd hoped.

The next five years were an exhausting juggle of responsibilities. She worked nine-to-five, raised her kids, and squeezed in acting and stand-up comedy on the side.

Tab started burning out. And amid all that stress, her health worsened. She developed crippling headaches and was flattened by chronic fatigue that left her off



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work and relying on disability insurance. Doctors couldn't help her. It was a low point in her life, lasting over a year and a half. Lost in a deep valley of depression, Tab struggled to find any hope.

They say the Lord works in mysterious ways. And in Tab's case, His ways involved tempeh bacon, vegan garlic aioli, and ciabatta bread. One day in 2017, after watching a Netflix documentary about healthy eating, she and Chance decided to do a 30-day vegan eating challenge.

For Tab, it was life-changing. Her health started improving immediately – and kept on improving. She got her energy back. By the end of the 30 days, she was convinced: veganism was for life.

Finally able to rejoin the working world, Tab took up employment as an Uber driver. And it was there, in her car, that she finally got her legendary – and totally unexpected – break. She happened to take a Facebook video of herself reviewing a delicious vegan sandwich she'd bought from Whole Foods, called the TTLA: tempeh, tomato, lettuce, and avocado.

Tab's charm, unpretentious humor, and enthusiasm made the video go viral – starting a whole trend of people posting their own video reviews of the sandwich. Whole Foods, understandably, soon hired her as an official brand ambassador. In this unexpected way, God had shown her the next step.

Encouraged by her daughter to post on TikTok, Tab's follower count skyrocketed into the millions in just a few weeks. Today she continues this close engagement with her fanbase, sharing vegan recipes and healthy eating tips, as well as life advice and encouragement.

Having found success in her own offbeat way, Tab urges people not to give up on their dreams, no matter their age. After all, it took her more than twenty years to realize hers.

A friend once asked her a question: What if God had told Tab in advance, "Yes, I can give you the exact life you want. But it's going to take you 23 years to get it." Would her younger self have taken this bargain? Tab sometimes wonders.

But what she does know is that every time she tried to walk away, a voice inside told her to keep going. God wouldn't let her quit. And she's endlessly grateful for that.



# DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

## FINAL SUMMARY

Everyone has their own unique vision for life, one that's theirs and theirs alone. Sometimes it is the parts of you that are most unique, most intimate, or most taken for granted that turn out to be your most valuable assets. So don't spurn any of the gifts God gives you!

As attached as we get to certain people, feelings, and beliefs, sometimes we have to say goodbye to them in order to keep on growing.

If there's a life that you're dreaming of living, Tab urges you not to give up on it. She journeyed for 23 years to reach her destination. And there were points along the way where she was lost and afraid. To reach your destination, you, too, have to persist – to start things up and get moving again when life stops you cold. And keep your eyes peeled for signs on the roadway, telling you which way is the right way.

In the end, the freedom that comes with being your authentic self is worth the sacrifice.