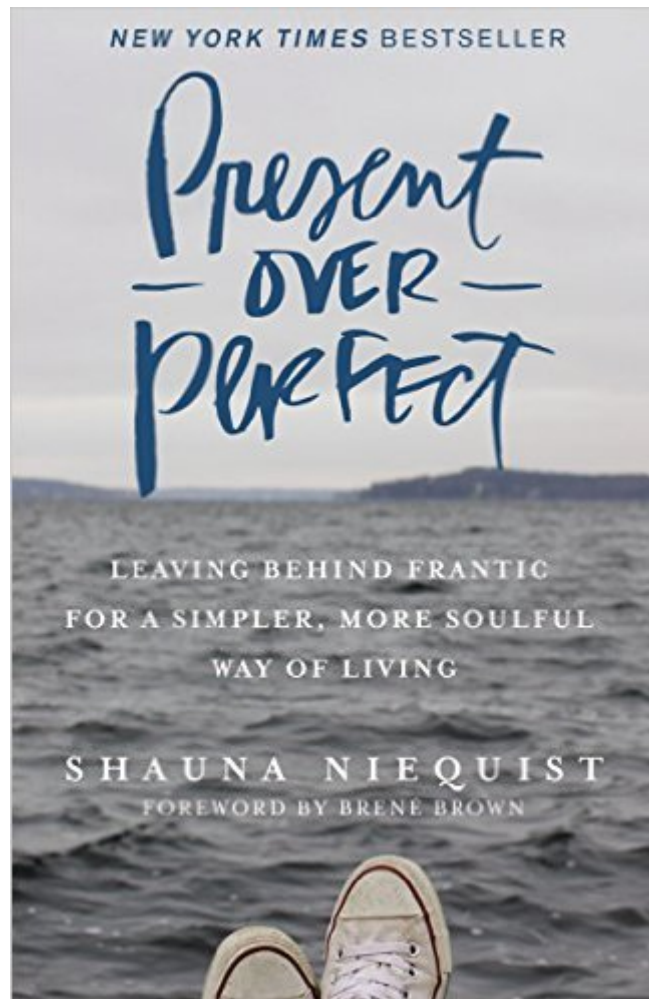


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# Present Over Perfect: Leaving Behind Frantic For A Simpler, More Soulful Way Of Living



## Synopsis

**LIVE A LIFE OF MEANING AND CONNECTION** Instead of pushing for perfection A few years ago, I found myself exhausted and isolated, my soul and body sick. I was tired of being tired, burned out on busy. And, it seemed almost everyone I talked with was in the same boat: longing for connection, meaning, depth, but settling for busy. I am a wife, mother, daughter, sister, friend, neighbor, writer, and I know all too well that settling feeling. But over the course of the last few years, I've learned a way to live, marked by grace, love, rest, and play. And it's changing everything. **Present Over Perfect** is an invitation to this journey that changed my life. I'll walk this path with you, a path away from frantic pushing and proving, and toward your essential self, the one you were created to be before you began proving and earning for your worth. Written in Shauna's warm and vulnerable style, this collection of essays focuses on the most important transformation in her life, and maybe yours too: leaving behind busyness and frantic living and rediscovering the person you were made to be. **Present Over Perfect** is a hand reaching out, pulling you free from the constant pressure to perform faster, push harder, and produce more, all while maintaining an exhausting image of perfection. Shauna offers an honest account of what led her to begin this journey, and a compelling vision for an entirely new way to live: soaked in grace, rest, silence, simplicity, prayer, and connection with the people that matter most to us. In these pages, you'll be invited to consider the landscape of your own life, and what it might look like to leave behind the pressure to be perfect and begin the life-changing practice of simply being present, in the middle of the mess and the ordinariness of life.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

I was drawn to Shauna Niequist's newest book, *Present Over Perfect* because its title seemed to indicate our current season. I quickly realized that Niequist's life and my life are vastly different. While I'm learning to live with a messy playroom, Niequist is finding balance by saying no to Big Opportunities and Flashy Job Offers. She's learning to settle in at home with a cup of tea and her family. Perhaps it's harder for someone with a lot of opportunities to say no and to find that balance. I'd imagine that the sparkle of recognition is tempting. In that sense, Niequist is open about her change in mindset and what that cost her family and her career. However, as an average mom who doesn't have a Big Career to say no to, I had trouble relating. The big ideas were powerful but the details were privileged and narrow. Niequist leads an idyllic life: Vacations at a lake house, travel, tons of family support, the ability to reimagine her work-from-home job to more perfectly fit her family's needs. And I say this as a middle-class, educated woman of privilege. I wonder how people living paycheck-to-paycheck, without the ease of reinvention would relate to this message? \*\*I received this book free from the publisher in exchange for my honest opinion.\*\*

This was my first book by the author. I had pre-ordered the book and had great anticipation. It pains me to say this, but I found it to be monotonous to read and only made it through 100 pages before giving it away. I can't help but think it would have been an outstanding essay. The message itself is valuable.

I devoured this book in two hours, ignoring a water glass long empty, a phone buzzing with jealousy and the swarm of mosquitos thrilled with my inattention. If you've ever felt life was going off the rails - stop everything and read this now. Take a sick day - from work, from life - and let this be the start of your healing. The topic is hard, so hard, but as always, Shauna's prose helps your brain digest and your heart accept that parts that hit too deep. I am a lifelong book-lover, and this may be the most important book of my life.

Let me start by saying that I have read all of Shauna's books and have loved them all...she is an amazing writer. With that said I could not wait to love this book...but just could not. I feel it has some good points but it is like a bunch of random thoughts strung together...not her usual organized story telling way of writing.

I tried to like it, I really did. But, I just could not relate. I don't have a 'spiritual advisor'. I can't just drop work projects. I didn't find any application for people who did not have her career.

I really wanted to love this book but there's just soooo much martyrdom. I can't handle the amount of "I am just such a self-sacrificer... To a fault!" there is. The first three chapters alone are so redundant that I wanted to poke my eyes out. I don't often let myself splurge on a book and I'm afraid I made a poor choice with this one. I heard her other books are better, maybe I'll give those a try.

As other reviewers have shared, I felt the subject matter became very repetitive making it difficult to finish. To simplify; learn to say No to the busyness in order to say Yes to more meaningful connections with your loved ones.

I really love Shauna's writing style because unlike a lot of Christian authors, she has a real love and feel for words. You can tell she reads constantly because her writing is so melodic, so rhythmic. I was very much anticipating this new book, and I was not disappointed. From the title you can tell exactly what it's about. It's written in short story format, so each essay could stand on it's own, yet somehow it all fits together beautifully because of the central heart of it. It is hard to pinpoint one main takeaway and judging by all the highlighting I did in my kindle edition, you can see what I mean. But if I had to pick one thing, it would be this: she talks about how as Christians we want to serve the kingdom of God, but yet we forget that we ourselves, our very personhood, are also in that kingdom that we serve. And if we are left wanting, and if we ourselves have to push our bodies to the limit, and sacrifice our souls in the process, than we aren't serving the kingdom at all. We're hurting it, because we're hurting ourselves. I'm not a mom, so sometimes I don't resonate with everything she says about motherhood, and marriage, but that piece stuck with me in a big way.

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