



DOING HARD THINGS
RIGHT WHERE YOU ARE

ALEX & BRETT
HARRIS
with Elisa Stanford

Praise for
Start Here

“Alex and Brett Harris are not impressed with themselves; they’re impressed with God. And they’re not afraid to get their hands dirtied up in the service of God’s blue-collar rescue operation. That’s a recipe for freedom—for ‘doing hard things.’ *Start Here* is a strategic field manual for young people who feel a burning desire to spend their *only* priceless asset—their own lives—to buy their way into God’s rebel uprising on earth. Alex and Brett call it The Rebelution. The Bible calls it the advance of the kingdom of God. I call it radically inspiring.”

—RICK LAWRENCE, executive editor of *Group Magazine*
and author of *Jesus-Centered Youth Ministry*

“One thing you’ll find about the next generation is that we are ready and willing to make a difference. Often times however, we don’t know where to start. If this describes you, Alex and Brett have provided a roadmap on how to begin your journey. *Start Here* is guaranteed to encourage and enable you to ‘do hard things.’”

—AUSTIN GUTWEIN, founder of Hoops of Hope and author
of *Take Your Best Shot*

Praise for
Do Hard Things
by Alex and Brett Harris

“*Do Hard Things* is an extraordinary book. In fact, I believe it will prove to be one of the most life-changing, family-changing, church-changing, and culture-changing books of this generation.”

—RANDY ALCORN, best-selling author of *If God Is Good, Heaven*, and *The Treasure Principle*

“Alex and Brett Harris are leading the way for the fight to save their generation, and in *Do Hard Things* they are beckoning others to join them. I pray that teenagers will listen to their cry and join them on the front lines.”

—RON LUCE, founder of Teen Mania Ministries and author of *Battle Cry for a Generation*

“Alex and Brett are the real deal, and *Do Hard Things* is a real wake-up call, not just for young people, but for all God’s people. I can’t recommend it highly enough.”

—SHANNON ETHRIDGE, best-selling author of *Every Young Woman’s Battle* and *Completely His*

START HERE

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Italics in Scripture quotations reflect the authors' added emphasis.

All the stories in *Start Here* come from real young people around the world. Their words have been edited for style and length but not for content. Used by permission.

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*To our grandmothers, Lily Sato and Frances Harris,
thank you for all your love and prayers.*

*To Randy Alcorn,
a faithful mentor and a living hero.*

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YOU ARE HERE

Opening the door to your own rebellion

Simple ideas and unbelievable dreams. First steps and great miracles. Ordinary teenagers and a God who still uses young people to accomplish His big plans.

That's what our first book, *Do Hard Things*, is all about. *Do Hard Things* shows how young people can take hold of a more exciting option for their teen years than what society suggests. We wrote the book to counter the Myth of Adolescence, which says the teen years are a time to goof off and have fun before "real life" starts. We invited our peers to choose to do hard things for the glory of God and, in the process, turn the world's idea of what teens are capable of upside down.

We were nineteen when we wrote *Do Hard Things*, twin brothers who wanted to follow God's call and challenge our generation. We're twenty-one now and sophomores in college. We still dream big dreams, still want to follow God completely, and still believe just as strongly that God wants to use our generation to change the world. (And, as you might have guessed, we're still twin brothers.)

Whether or not you've read *Do Hard Things* (we'd recommend it—but, of course, we're a little biased), this companion book continues the *Do Hard Things* message and piles on stories, practical suggestions, and detailed how-tos. You can use it either on your own or in a group setting, depending on your situation.

In other words, *Do Hard Things* marked the beginning of a movement. *Start Here* is your personal field guide to jumping in and getting involved.

The Rebelution Movement

The concept of doing hard things actually started as a blog we created when we were sixteen. We called it The Rebelution—a combination of *rebellion* and *revolution* to create a whole new word with a whole new meaning. We defined *rebelution* as “a teenage rebellion against low expectations.” (By the way, the blog still exists. Check it out at TheRebelution.com.)

Since *Do Hard Things* came out, the Rebelution movement has exploded. In the past year, rebelutionary teens have raised tens of thousands of dollars to bring the gospel to and dig wells in Africa, won prestigious film festivals, fought human trafficking in the United States and around the world, and made it on the cover of *ESPN The Magazine*. Around the world, young people are moving out of their comfort zones—whether that means standing for Christ in a hostile classroom, raising money to build a dormitory for orphans in China, or mending relationships with parents or younger siblings.

Maybe you're part of the Rebelution already, or maybe you

just want to find out more. Maybe you're asking one of the questions we get most frequently from readers: "Where do I start?"

This book is about taking the next step. It includes ideas from us and dozens of other young people on topics like:

- how to stand up for what you believe
- strategies for overcoming stage fright, fund-raising fright, and phone-calling fright (hint: it gets easier as you go!)
- ways to get going when you feel stuck and keep going when you feel discouraged
- how to understand God's will and glorify Him through your efforts
- God-honoring ways to think, feel, and act *after* you've completed a big project

In short, this is a handbook full of practical steps and real-life stories to encourage and equip you on your journey of doing hard things. We want you to feel as if you're at one of our conferences, or in a small group of people talking about doing hard things—which you may be!

All the questions in the pages that follow come from people just like you, collected on our website and through personal conversations. We'll do our best to answer them with stories and insights from our own lives. We're traveling alongside you in this adventure—and we want to share with you what God has been teaching us these past few years.

But just like *Do Hard Things*, this book isn't about us. It's about the incredible, seemingly impossible things God is doing in our generation. That's why in *Start Here* you'll find dozens of true stories from rebelutionaries who are making a difference in their homes, at their schools, and around the world. We love

sharing other young people's stories because they challenge us as well—and remind us that we're not alone. We also love the way real-life stories provide a glimpse of the diverse ways God wants to use each of us to do hard things for Him.

Toward the end of the book, we'll be sharing the stories of two rebelutionaries in particular: Ana Zimmerman and John Moore. As you'll see, Ana and John took on very different hard things, each with the purpose of glorifying God and helping others.

At the age of fifteen, Ana raised more than six thousand dollars and organized an event called Love the Least in her hometown. The event introduced her community to the work of Abort73, an organization that exists to show the injustice of abortion.

With a group of fellow teens, John Moore wrote, produced, and directed his own feature film at the age of nineteen—and went on to win the \$101,000 grand prize at the San Antonio Independent Christian Film Festival.

John and Ana faced many of the same hurdles and questions you're encountering. Their stories provide an in-depth look at the beginning, middle, and end of the "do hard things" process. We think you'll be encouraged and inspired.

Pursuing Faithfulness, Not Success

As thousands of young people around the world are discovering, doing hard things is the most satisfying, thrilling way to live some of the best years of our lives.

So where do you start? As you'll find in the pages that follow, the answer is: right where you are. Being a rebelutionary means committing to doing even ordinary things extraordinarily well.

As each of us is faithful in that, God will be faithful to prepare us for whatever calling He has for us.

For some of us, that calling will be big in the world's eyes, and for some of us it will be small. Whether it is big or small, God will be glorified—and the world will be changed by a generation that gives up seeking worldly success to pursue a life of faithfulness.

That's when the ordinary becomes extraordinary. And that's what this book is about.

Ready to start?

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