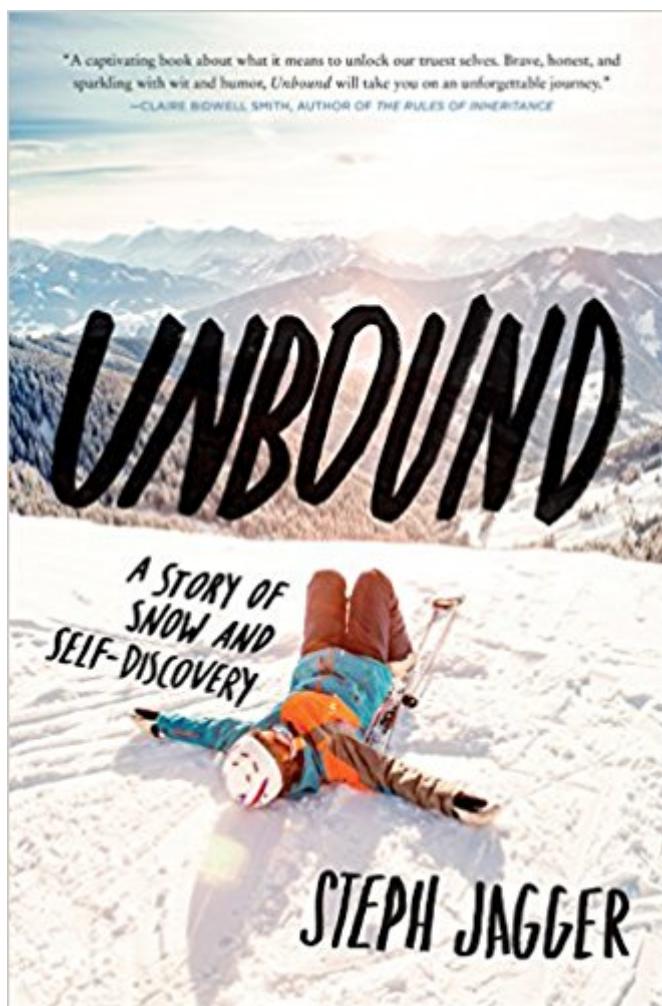


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# Unbound: A Story Of Snow And Self-Discovery



## Synopsis

A young woman follows winter across five continents on a physical and spiritual journey that tests her body and soul, in this transformative memoir, full of heart and courage, that speaks to the adventurousness in all of us. Steph Jagger had always been a force of nature. Dissatisfied with the passive, limited roles she saw for women growing up, she emulated the men in her life—chasing success, climbing the corporate ladder, ticking the boxes, playing by the rules of a masculine ideal. She was accomplished. She was living "The Dream." But it wasn't her dream. Then the universe caught her attention with a sign: Raise Restraining Device. Steph had seen this ski lift sign on countless occasions in the past, but the familiar words suddenly became a personal call to shake off the life she had built in a search for something different, something more. Steph soon decided to walk away from the success and security she had worked long and hard to obtain. She quit her job, took a second mortgage on her house, sold everything except her ski equipment and her laptop, and bought a bundle of plane tickets. For the next year, she followed winter across North and South America, Asia, Europe, and New Zealand—and up and down the mountains of nine countries—on a mission to ski four million vertical feet in a year. What hiking was for Cheryl Strayed, skiing became for Steph: a crucible in which to crack open her life and get to the very center of herself. But she would have to break herself down—first physically, then emotionally—before she could start to rebuild. And it was through this journey that she came to understand how to be a woman, how to love, and how to live authentically. Electrifying, heartfelt, and full of humor, *Unbound* is Steph's story—an odyssey of courage and self-discovery that, like *Wild* and *Eat, Pray, Love*, will inspire readers to remove their own restraining devices and pursue the life they are meant to lead.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Steph Jagger Talks With Chris Guillebeau Chris Guillebeau is the author of *Born for This*, *The \$100 Startup*, and other books. Chris: One time I went skiing for an hour, and then I went for hot chocolate in the lodge. Steph Jagger, whom I met at a book event in San Diego, went skiing and didn't stop until she'd gone more than four million vertical feet. Naturally, I wanted to learn more. Steph, tell us a little about your big accomplishment. STEPH: From July 2010 to May 2011, I circumnavigated the globe in search of snow. It was a Blizzard of Oz. While traveling I skied 4,161,823 vertical feet, breaking the world record for most vertical feet skied in a single year. My original goal was 4,000,000 feet—but when I found out about the record I couldn't help but tack on a few extra feet! Chris: What made you decide to undertake this quest? Steph: In 2008, I was discontented with a life everyone said I should be happy about. And then, during a ski trip with co-workers, excitement overtook me and I blurted out the most cliché thing any weekend-warrior could: "This makes me want to quit my job and ski all around the world." Silence followed. Then chuckles. Then full-blown howling. "What's stopping you?!" my co-workers snickered between gasps of air. At the top of the lift, I turned my head and saw a small blue sign, one I had seen a million times before: Raise Restraining Device I knew it right then. I needed to raise my metaphorical restraining devices and take a leap. Chris: Most quests usually contain trials or difficulties. Were there any low points in your journey? If yes, how did you manage to persevere? Steph: I'll give you three: 1. My parents didn't initially buy in. To get over it, I skied. 2. Halfway through my trip, I was WAY behind my goal. To get over it, I skied. 3. I lost one ski in the backcountry in Japan. It was a dangerous day and it shook me up. To get over it, I skied . . . using one leg, and one ski. Chris: How did the quest change you? Steph: I learned not to underestimate myself. I went from being a participant, a do-what's-expected kind of gal, to a woman who really understands what it means to live an unrestrained life. I no longer fear change and even when I have it good, I try to push for great. The biggest takeaway wasn't that I became a new person. It's that I became a juicier, more concentrated version of myself. The quest gave me the validation I needed to leave behind the parts of me that were no longer useful and to really grab hold of what my true strengths, talents, and gifts are. Chris: What advice would you give

someone starting a quest? Steph: 1. Break it down. You can't put "ski 4 million feet" on your to-do list and expect it to magically get done. 2. You'll get what you need along the way. You don't start these types of quests knowing all the answers. If you did, what would be the point? Chris: What else? I bet there are some fun facts about all your adventures. Steph: In the ten months I was gone, I slept in 65 beds; boarded 31 flights, including one helicopter; skied in 45 different resorts; visited 9 varieties of healers; used one pair of very trusty ski boots; and washed my long johns approximately 8 times. Ugh.

"Steph Jagger has written a captivating book about what it means to unlock our truest selves. Brave, honest and sparkling with wit and humor, *Unbound* will take you on an unforgettable journey." (Claire Bidwell Smith, author of *The Rules of Inheritance*) "Unbound is a case study in navigating discontent. Buy this book for everyone you know who believes there's more to life than getting a mortgage and climbing the corporate ladder." (Chris Guillebeau, New York Times bestselling author of *Born for This* and *The \$100 Startup*) "A Wild-esque memoir of adventure and reflection." (Self) "Unbound is a brave, beautiful journey through the winter of a life. A gorgeous memoir!" (Aspen Matis, author of *Girl in the Woods*) "A daring journey-complete with the unexpected twists, turns, and transformations that happen when you lean into a dream." (Janice MacLeod, author of *New York Times* bestseller *Paris Letters*) "Steph Jagger is as bitingly funny as she is willing to expose her own vulnerabilities" - the result is a refreshingly honest read. Through her own journey, she prompts us to live truthfully, deliberately, and to say yes, whether to an extra lap or a deeper look at one's self. (Lucy Higgins, Associate Editor of *Backcountry Magazine*) "With snow as her compass and ski goggles as her lens, Steph Jagger embarks on an inspiring ten-month journey of self-discovery and reinvention. Not just for skiers, *Unbound* is a captivating read that demonstrates the value in following one's heart beyond the beaten path." (Becky Wade, professional runner and author of *Run the World: My 3,500-Mile Journey Through Running Cultures Around the Globe*) "Unbound is a stunning book that is sure to bring out the inner bad-ass in each of its readers. If you've ever dreamt of standing on the dazzling mountain tops of your life, this book is for you." (Linda Sivertsen, bestselling author and host of the *Beautiful Writers Podcast*) "Steph Jagger takes the reader over her skis in a daredevil world-wide run. No laterals, no time-outs, no taking ball four. It's just you and the mountain. Hold on for an adventurous read." (Dick Enberg, Emmy Award-winning

Sportscaster) "Unbound is a page turner. It's punchy, sexy, and funny, and most of all, it helped me understand my own story better." (Shelby Stanger, adventure journalist, *Outside Magazine*) "Unbound begins with an epic ski trip, and ends with a completely different journey, one that is richer and deeper than the snow found on the slopes of the world. Along the way, we experience the places Jagger travels to, feel her frustrations, celebrate her triumphs and feel for the woman who allows us to see her for who she is. It is impossible not to admire such honesty." (Stella Harvey, author of *The Brink of Freedom* and

Five continents, four million vertical feet, and one woman in search of herself Steph Jagger had always been a force of nature. Dissatisfied with the passive, limited roles she saw for women as she was growing up, she emulated the men in her life — chasing success, climbing the corporate ladder, ticking the boxes, playing by the rules of a masculine ideal. She was accomplished. She was living "The Dream." But it wasn't her dream. Then the universe caught her attention with a sign: raise restraining device. Steph had seen this ski-lift sign countless times, but the familiar words suddenly became a personal call to shake off the life she had built and start a search for something different, something more. Steph soon decided to walk away from the success and security she had worked long and hard to obtain. She quit her job, took a second mortgage on her house, sold everything except her ski equipment and her laptop, and bought a bundle of plane tickets. For the next year, she followed winter up and down the mountains of North and South America, Asia, Europe, and New Zealand on a mission to ski four million vertical feet in a year. What hiking was for Cheryl Strayed, skiing became for Steph: a crucible in which to crack open her life and get to the very center of herself. But she would have to break herself down — first physically, then emotionally — before she could start to rebuild. And it was through this journey of body and soul that she came to understand how to be a woman, how to love, and how to live authentically. Electrifying, heartfelt, and full of humor, *Unbound* is a transformative memoir — an odyssey of courage and self-discovery that will inspire readers to raise their own restraining devices and pursue the life they are meant to lead.

Finally, a memoir about how we don't need to be in the muck of life, broken and in despair, to make a significant change. And the timing of this book couldn't be more perfect! Steph is an inspiration to anyone (male or female) who doesn't want to settle for mediocre. I laughed out loud and wanted to run out the door with a pair of skis in hand and a new sense of adventure into the world. Steph is an inspiration to make changes (big and small) and she gives us permission to have a damn good time

living life to its fullest!

I really enjoyed this book. Though I'm a long way from snow, I could really appreciate the challenge and adventure of Steph's quest. Unlike many of these types of stories, she remained honest to herself (and the reader) in good times and in bad. I loved her sardonic turn of phrase and she did a great job of describing the different locations - giving us a keen sense of the "personality" of each mountain location. Remarkable.

Unbound is what the world of the divine feminine has been waiting for. A bold, brave and kick-ass woman who has the courage to share herself fully and reveal her triumphs and failures with the world so that we may be encouraged and inspired.

I couldn't put this book down. I read it every free moment I had for 3 days! I laughed out loud, cried a few times, and ultimately felt empowered to ask for more in my life. As someone who many may might say was "given it all," it's nice to find a book that gives me the permission to explore who I am without my life being a complete wreck beforehand. (From the outside that is). Also, you feel like you really get to know Steph, from her humor to how she sees the world. It was like being invited in along on her journey as a best friend. 100% would recommend this for anyone searching for more, deconstructing their long held views of the world, who is completely bored with their life, or feels like something's got to give. Thanks for writing this, Steph. -Madison Hedlund

Whiny, narcissistic writing of a special snowflake. I used to identify as a special snowflake! Here's the thing. I'm a similar age to Jagger and I have also done a few adventure trips and backpacked around the world for a year. I am so glad our paths never crossed! I found her challenge of skiing 4 million vertical feet to be unbelievable if she was going for a record, why wouldn't she have had a more in-depth way to record it and I found her writing juvenile, solipsistic, and devoid of any real emotion. Jagger thought she was a "tiger" in her family of goats. Um, okay? So she goes into debt and stays at resorts for a year and makes it sound hard. She also falls in love which is awesome but the way she writes about her love affair and the way she uses the word vagina is cringe worthy (and I love talking vaginas!) Basically, this felt like a high school sophomore read "Wild" and tried to write something similar. The "epiphanies" were forced, the adventure was boring and I just didn't like Jagger as narrator she

seemed so pleased with herself in a way that was obnoxious and off putting. Ugh.

Steph Jagger's "Unbound" is, on the surface, the story of Jagger's journey around the world to ski 4 million vertical feet. In the tradition of "Eat, Pray, Love," there's an internal journey going on as well, one that takes a deep turn into an identity crisis. There's no pivotal, tragic event that specifically brings on Jagger's transformation. Instead, it comes on gradually during her trip. Jagger is a hardcore athlete, a self-proclaimed extrovert, and unabashedly one of the guys. A big part of her journey involves embracing her own femininity (something she always perceived as weakness) and becoming, "both a warrior and a goddess." The memoir features some beautiful descriptions of the countries Jagger visited, and the mountains she skied. A few interesting people she finds along the way become knit into her journey as well. I enjoyed the book, mostly for the vicarious travel. But I also appreciated Jagger's very raw, blunt way of writing about herself and her life. Sometimes, the sarcasm got a bit heavy, but that ebbed off as she started accepting herself. At the risk of sounding prudish, I could've had less of her sex life, but I get how that plays a part in her reclaiming her womanhood. I don't have much in common with Jagger, but I could still keep up with the ski jargon. I appreciate that she kept her book accessible to the less-athletic reader. "Unbound" is a high-energy read about someone really going after the life she wants. Even if you don't ski, it will make you think about where you are and what you want to accomplish.

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