

30 Days to Alleviate Depression

Backed by science.

Verified by experience.

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**Introduction, welcome,
and rule of thumb on when to seek
professional help**

Introduction

Hi, my name is Linda and all my life I've tried to be optimistic and friendly. I never expected that I would have to deal with depression and social anxiety, but life has a way of throwing us curves that we're not expecting and for five years I struggled with overwhelming sadness and despair. It was as if I'd fallen into a deep dark pit where sunlight couldn't enter. My hope, happiness, and zest for life shriveled up and disappeared. There were no windows and no doors in my pit of despair and I lost all hope that I could ever get out. I thought this would be my new permanent reality where the best scenario I could possibly hope for was to successfully endure one day after another after another.

Then one day, someone lowered a ladder down into my dark hole and invited me to climb out. I wasn't sure it would work and I felt too weak and helpless to make the climb, but the idea that there was a possibility of escape made me give it a try. That invitation rekindled a spark of hope which was something I thought was dead forever. That decision to try changed my life.

Hope, happiness, and a zest for life reawakened and life is good again. It's very good. It's almost as if that episode of darkness was just a really long, bad dream. I could move forward and forget the whole thing ever happened, but there's one problem with that plan. I know that there are other people who are still stuck in deep, dark wells of hopelessness and despair and I know what that feels like. I want to offer a ladder of hope to as many people as possible and extend an invitation to climb out with the assurance that there is healing and happiness available if we reach for it.

Welcome

Welcome to 30 days to Alleviate Depression, I'm so glad that you chose to accept my invitation. There is a bright future in store.

Before we begin, we need to talk about a couple things. First we need to discuss when it is appropriate to get professional help. My qualification for writing this book is that I am is a person with experience healing from depression. I have experience, I have a plan, and I teach scientifically proven principles that work, but I do not claim to be a mental health care professional. You should never delay seeking medical advice, disregard medical advice, or discontinue medical treatment because of anything that you read in this book.

So how do you know when your depressive symptoms have reached a point when professional help would be a good idea? Here's a good rule of thumb;^[1]

If your depressed mood lasts more than two weeks, or is seriously interfering with your ability to function at work, with your family, your social life, or you are contemplating suicide, it would be a very good idea for you to consult with a mental health professional as soon as possible and make an appointment. If you are feeling acutely suicidal, there is no time to waste with appointments. Take yourself immediately to your local hospital emergency room and tell them that you are feeling suicidal, or call the suicide prevention lifeline or simply call 911.

Some practitioners classify depression into two broad types:^[2]

- Endogenous (or chemical) depression which is thought to reflect some kind of "chemical imbalance" in the brain.
- Exogenous (or external) depression which is thought to arise from an external cause like a traumatic life experience, or stress.

Basically that means depression can stem from internal physiological imbalances or external environmental sources or a combination of those and it's helpful to seek a professional who helps you determine the root cause of depressive symptoms. Treatment that addresses root causes is more likely to be successful long term than treatment that merely addresses symptoms.^[3]

Following this 30 day course can help with externally caused depression by relieving symptoms, boosting mood, regaining confidence and improving control over your life. It may also help those with depression that is based in chemical issues. Through MRI scans, we now have proof that changes in thinking cause significant, measurable changes in brain chemistry and functioning.^[4]

We also need to discuss medication. Anti-depressant medication plays a critical role in the treatment of depression. In the right patient, anti-depressants reduce the symptoms of suffering exceptionally well and can be literally life-saving.^[5]

It is important to understand that anti-depressants only treat the symptoms of depression, therefore they can't actually make anyone happy.^[6] Happiness isn't merely the absence of suffering. Many experts feel that the best approach is to treat the symptoms of depression with anti-depressants at the same time as addressing the underlying cause of the depression itself.^[7]

Reading this book and doing the exercises can help relieve depressive symptoms and boost mood, but it is intended to be a companion, rather than a replacement for professional treatment and medication.



**Commitment, intention,
and what to expect**

Commitment, intention, and what to expect

Each day for the next four weeks will include a simple diet modification, an easy morning routine, a daily task, and an evening routine. The steps are simple, but effective. However, *they will only work if you actually do them*. Apathy and hopelessness are standard symptoms of depression; chances are that I'm going to ask you to do things that you don't want to do or don't feel motivated to do. I'm going to ask you to do them anyway.

Most people don't choose to enter into the world of depression and anxiety, it is thrust upon them against their will. However, no one is able to get out of the world of depression and anxiety without choosing to do something about it.^[8]

That doesn't mean that depression is somehow your fault, it just means that it requires effort to overcome it. Whether that effort comes in the form of seeking professional help, consistently taking medication, following the principles in this course or a combination of techniques doesn't matter, what matters is that a person has a desire to heal and takes steps to accomplish that goal. A growing body of research shows that people's mindsets can measurably affect healing.^[9]

Please commit with me to work on improving your mental and emotional wellbeing for the next 30 days and to follow the steps as outlined.

I, _____, commit to follow the outlined steps for the next 30 days.

Thank you. Commitment is the initial step. The next step is our intention. Research shows that our intentions manifest an influence on healing.^{[10], [11]}

My intention is to provide a method to help you improve your mental and emotional wellbeing, but my intention is not sufficient. It needs to be coupled with *your* intention.

Please say and accept the following intention:

My intention is to live in a state of mental and emotional wholeness. My intention is to live joyfully, vibrantly and abundantly. My intention is to love my life and to experience pleasure and delight in each day.

Excellent. Now we're ready to begin.

Turn to the expert for answers

You are the expert on you. The answers to your challenges are actually already inside of you and I'm going to help you find them through a series of small consistent steps that will help foster healing, alleviate sadness, re-awaken a sense of joy and allow the answers to begin to flow through you.

General instructions

Each day for the next four weeks will include simple actions organized into diet modification, a morning routine, daily action steps, and evening routine. These are designed to be short and easy enough to reasonably fit into a regular schedule.

Diet Modification

There is a strong correlation between the way we eat and the way we feel.^[12] If we want to feel good, it's important to become aware of the way we eat and drink. It might be overwhelming to completely overhaul your diet within 30 days, but we can at least begin with a few simple modifications that are easy enough that anyone can do them. For the next 30 days we're going to increase our water intake, eat more fruits and veggies and take a good quality vitamin B supplement.

Water

Drinking water is a simple, effective, but often overlooked tool to improve mental and emotional health. Studies show that even mild dehydration has been shown to negatively affect brain structure and function, negatively impact mood, and trigger fatigue.^{[13], [14], [15]}

Each day we'll be drinking 8 glasses of water, and by water I mean actual water, not soda, diet soda, coffee, or tea. Studies have shown that caffeine consumption can lead to increased anxiety, depression and also increases the need for anxiety medication.^{[16], [17]}

Ideally we would replace those caffeinated and sugary beverages with water, but if you're not ready to give those up and are willing to make a few more trips to the bathroom, so be it. If you want to add a little flavor to your water you could squeeze a slice of lemon or lime into the water, or sprinkle in a little Gatorade or Crystal Light powder. If you prefer your drinks warm, caffeine free herbal tea is also fine.

Some people wonder what counts as a "glass of water"? The answer is eight ounces, and since most cups or glasses in your cupboard contain much more than eight ounces, you don't have to fill them up eight times. A standard water bottle is about 16 ounces so if you drink one bottle when you wake up in the morning and one with each meal that would easily fulfill this requirement. This is not overwhelming. It's actually very doable.

If you prefer to sip water throughout the day, a refillable water bottle can help you measure your water intake.

My personal preference is to drink four water bottles. That way I don't have to spend any time trying to keep track or figure out the math. And we can recycle or refill the bottles to show respect for the environment.

Fruits and Veggies

Let's talk about food. Many people have seen tremendous physical, emotional and mental improvements simply by altering their diets from sugary and nutritionally deficient processed foods to a diet rich with whole grains, organic fruits and vegetables, and quality protein.^{[18], [19]}

We're not going to worry about a complete diet overhaul, but we are going to eat at least 5 servings of fruits and/or veggies. Eating a piece of fruit with each meal and snacking on a few carrots sticks and celery sticks in between meals is a great way to do this, but you can figure out what works best for you.

Good quality vitamin B complex supplement

Our bodies need good fuel to run well. We're doing a few things to improve our nutrition, but since we're not doing a complete overhaul, we're going to supplement with a good quality B complex vitamin because a deficiency in B vitamins has been shown to be linked to depression.^{[20], [21]}

Some people have seen a noticeable improvement in the way they feel mentally and emotionally just by including a vitamin B supplement to their daily routine. Their brains just needed the right nutritional tools to work with.^[22]

There are eight B complex vitamins, but they're not all called "Vitamin B" they have other names including:^[23]

- thiamin
- riboflavin.
- niacin.
- pantothenic acid.
- biotin.
- vitamin B6 (pyridoxine)
- folate (called folic acid when included in supplements)
- vitamin B12 (cyanocobalamin).

I don't know why they name them that way, and I don't know why there's a vitamin B12 when there are only eight B vitamins, but I do know that vitamin B can make a difference. Deficiencies in vitamin B, particularly vitamins B6 and B12, have been shown in multiple studies to be linked to symptoms of depression.^{[24], [25]}

As a word of caution, we need to recognize that not all supplements are the same quality. Low quality supplements aren't very effective.^[26] There is a website called multivitamin guide [www.multivitaminguide.org] that compares the effectiveness of 100 different vitamin brands which may be a useful guide in selecting a good quality supplement.

Morning routine

We're going to begin each morning with a few simple steps to get our day started in the right direction. It will only take about 15 minutes and can reasonably fit into a normal routine. The routine will change from time to time, but I'll explain each step as we go.

Daily action steps

Each day will include a few action steps that can be completed any time during the day. They will only take about 30 minutes and can reasonably fit into a normal schedule. I'll explain what to do each day.

Evening routine

How we begin and end each day is very important. As a general rule, the last things we think about at night run through our minds while we sleep, so we can accelerate healing by putting good things into our minds before bed.^[27] The evening routine consists of four simple steps that can be completed in about 15 minutes and should help you be able to relax and enjoy better quality sleep which in turn helps us have a better day tomorrow.

In summary

The program for the next thirty days will include simple actions that are intended to be easy and quick enough to reasonably fit into a regular schedule including:

- Diet modification consisting of drinking 8 glasses of water each day, eating 5 servings of fruits and vegetables, and including a good quality vitamin B complex supplement.
- Morning routine (to be completed sometime before noon) which consists of four simple steps that can be completed in about 15 minutes.
- Daily action steps (to be completed anytime during the day) that can be completed in about 30 minutes.
- Evening routine (to be completed sometime before midnight) which consists of four simple steps that can be completed in about 15 minutes.



“I am” poster

The following page contains an “I am” poster which we will be referring to throughout this course.



Emotional First Aid Kit

I'm going to ask you to do things that you may not want to do and may not feel motivated to do. I'm going to ask you to do them anyway.

You may feel discouraged, overwhelmed or simply hit a wall. I'm going to ask you to push through it.

This next section is an emotional first aid kit to give you the tools you need to get started and to keep going. I believe in you. I believe that you can do this and I know that it's worth it.

Beware of the walls

I need to explain about some challenges that are going to arise. There is a phenomenon that scientists call the 'mere exposure effect'^[28] and you need to understand how this will affect you as you try to make any change in the way you think.

Research shows that we are more likely to believe things that we hear over and over again, just because we heard it over and over again, and it doesn't matter if it's true or not.^[29] We believe things because they are familiar. And once we believe something, our subconscious will fight to protect those beliefs by rejecting anything that is unfamiliar or contradicts what we already believe.^[30]

So what that means to a person who is trying to overcome depression, is that when feelings of misery, discouragement, sadness and hopelessness are familiar we believe them to be the only possible truth.

If you try to change; if you try to be happy or positive or if you try to rekindle hope, your subconscious will fight to reject those thoughts because they contradict what it already believes to be true.^[31]

Your subconscious is trying to keep you safe by protecting what you believe to be true, and it fights hard. It may feel like running into an impenetrable wall. When I first hit that wall, I literally felt all the mental, emotional, and physiological sensations as if my life was being threatened. You could have pointed a gun to my head and it wouldn't have felt any more life threatening than my subconscious telling me that I tried to change, if I tried to believe I had value, or be happy and hopeful then I would surely die. My subconscious told me that the only safe path was to turn back and give up.

To someone watching from the outside, it would probably look pretty ridiculous, but the battle on the inside was so very real. I needed some tools to get past these walls or I would have given up on the very first day.

So I'm going to share several tools to help you get past your walls. To get past my first wall where my subconscious was telling me that I would die if I didn't turn back, I sang through a song three times, and that was enough to make it through that wall and through the first day of recovery. The tools are simple. You might even think they sound foolish, but please use them anyway because they work.

You can do this, I'll freely admit that it was hard, but it's oh so worth it. Scientific research shows that if you're persistent then those same principles of repetition that create familiarity can also change the way you think and the way you feel. But don't give up half way or it will make it harder.^[32]

Stick with me. You got this. You can knock those walls over and turn them into stairs that will take you to a higher, happier plane.

Sing a song 3X

The first tool I'm going to share is to sing a song, because that's the first tool that got me through a rough spot. I felt threatened and it was like an impenetrable wall trying to hold me back. I sang through the song "Try Anything" by Shakira three times. Once wasn't enough, I needed to sing it through three times, in order to pass through that wall and feel like I could make it through another day.

Singing has been scientifically proven to lower stress, relieve anxiety, and elevate endorphins which make you feel uplifted and happy.^[33] It helps relax muscle tension and decreases the levels of the stress hormone cortisol in the blood stream and can help take your mind off the day's troubles to boost your mood.^[34]

In addition, scientists have identified a tiny organ in the ear called the sacculus, which responds to the frequencies created by singing.^[35] The response creates an immediate sense of pleasure, regardless of what the singing sounds like so you don't have to have an amazing voice to feel the positive effects of singing.

Participants in one study showed significant decreases in both anxiety and depression levels after one month of adding singing to their routine.^[36]

So if you find yourself in a rough spot, sing along to an upbeat, positive song. Sing through one song three times or sing three different positive upbeat songs once. Allow the music to wash through you and feel the healing and invigorating effects immediately lifting mood and bringing relief.^[37] From my own experience, I can say that it really works.

Print out the lyrics so you can sing all the words and choose songs that have lyrics that have meaning to you personally. Here are a few suggested songs to help you create your own list: *Roar* by Katy Perry, *Try Everything* by Shakira, *Waka Waka* by Shakira, *Brave* by Sara Bareilles, *Unwritten* by Natasha Bedingfield, *Fight Song* by Rachel Platten, *Happy* by Pharrel Williams, *Better When I'm Dancin'* by Meghan Trainor, *On Top of the World* by Imagine Dragons, *Believer* by Imagine Dragons, and *You Are Loved* by Stars Go Dim.

5 second rule

One technique that can help you when you are struggling with motivation is to use the 5 second rule made famous by Mel Robbins.^[38]

The 5 second rule is simple, it's like a countdown for a launch. If there's something you know you should do, but need a boost to actually do it, start counting down from 5 like this 5, 4, 3, 2, 1, and then do it immediately.

The idea behind the 5 second rule is simple: if you have an impulse to act on a goal, you must physically move within 5 seconds or your brain will kill the idea.^[39]

Remember, you can't control how you feel, but you can always choose how you act.

Boost confidence and mood with a hero pose

You can improve your mood in just 90 seconds by doing this one simple trick. Put your chin up, smile (even if you don't feel like it). Pull your shoulders back, stand straight and tall with your hands relaxed at your sides or on your hips. Keep both feet pointing forward and keep weight even on both legs. Hold this position for 90 seconds.

Science shows that doing these things will not only make you appear more confident and happy; it actually makes you feel more confident and happy.^{[40], [41], [42]}

Even if you don't feel like it, doing the actions will help increase those feelings. If we want to feel happy then we need to smile more. If we want to feel confident then we stand tall and pull our shoulders back. Holding this pose for just 90 seconds increases the level of testosterone which boosts confidence, while decreasing the level of cortisol which lowers stress.^[43]

Furthermore, smiling, even if it's a fake or forced smile, increases the production of mood-enhancing hormones such as dopamine, serotonin and endorphins which can help us feel better.^{[44], [45]}

Connect with nature

Spending time outside in nature is good for the body and the mind.^[46] It helps distract us from problems and just helps us feel good.

If the weather permits, take off your shoes and feel the grass or sand under your feet. Feel the warmth of the sun and the coolness of the breeze and feel your body moving as you walk. Hear the birds, or the waves, or the rustle of the grass in the wind. Smell the flowers and the trees and see the beauty of nature around you. Enjoy a sensory experience in nature and feel its healing effects.^[47]

Take a walk

Virtually any form of exercise can act as a stress reliever. It does wonderful things to help our emotional well-being.^[48] It increases the production of endorphins, which are the brain's feel-good neurotransmitters. It is also a form of moving meditation which calms us down and distracts us from our problems. It improves mood, helps us relax and improves quality of sleep.^[49] So if you're feeling stressed out, it might be a good idea to pause and go for a walk

Visualize a shield

If you're struggling with feelings of fear and vulnerability, visualizing a shield can be a way to help you feel safer.^[50] Mental creation with intention is a powerful thing. We can invent, create, experience and destroy things with thoughts alone.^[51]

Creating a shield basically means imagining, visualizing, intending and feeling that you are completely surrounded by a force field or shield. Be creative and specific in imagining what it looks like, what color it is, how it feels inside and any other specific details you can think of. Imagine that negative comments are deflected by the shield. They don't even reach you and they can't get inside you. You allow them to bounce off into space where they are harmless. Choose to allow positive comments to flow through the shield. The shield is a filter, not a wall.

In my experience, I was feeling fearful, like every person and every situation was a potential threat to me and that was causing anxiety and stress. So I made it a habit to create a shield each morning as a part of my daily routine, just like brushing my teeth. And if I found myself stressed out, overly emotional, threatened or before I had to attend some social function where I knew there would be a lot of people, I would reapply my shield. I thought it sounded a little silly when the idea was first suggested to me, but it really helped as a coping mechanism and with time the fear began to subside and now I feel perfectly safe wherever I am without having to do that.

2 minute distraction

One of the unhealthiest and most common forms of negative thinking is called rumination.^[52]

To ruminate means to chew over. It's when your boss yells at you or you make an embarrassing mistake, or you have a big fight with a friend and you just can't stop replaying the scene in your head for days, sometimes for weeks on end.

Spending so much time focused on upsetting and negative thoughts, actually puts you at significant risk for developing clinical depression, alcoholism, eating disorders, and even cardiovascular disease.^[53]

The problem is, the urge to ruminate can feel really strong, so it's a difficult habit to stop. But there are ways to combat that urge. Studies tell us that even a two-minute distraction is sufficient to break the urge to ruminate in that moment.^[54]

If your thoughts are swirling in despair, take action to break free of them and attain a fresh perspective. Become immersed in a great book that moves you or watch a movie that transports you. Exercise. Go for a walk. In short, do what you know from experience bounces your thinking to a more optimistic place.^[55]

If you can succeed in changing your mental channel for at least two minutes you have a chance of breaking that destructive cycle of rumination. By battling negative thinking, you won't just heal your psychological wounds, you will build emotional resilience, and you will thrive.^[56]

Laughter

When looking for an excellent distraction, laughter really is the best medicine. Laughter stops distressing emotions. It helps you shift perspective, allowing you to see situations in a more realistic, less threatening light.

Laughter makes you feel good. It triggers the release of endorphins, the body's natural feel-good chemicals.^[57] And the good feeling that you get when you laugh remains with you even after the laughter subsides. Humor helps you keep a positive, optimistic outlook

through difficult situations, disappointments, and loss. It adds joy and zest to life, eases anxiety and tension, relieves stress, improves mood, and strengthens resilience.

So what makes you laugh? A good joke? Funny cat videos? Make a list of things that make you laugh and keep them on hand because nothing works faster or more dependably to bring your mind and body back into balance than a good laugh.^[58]

Mini-meditation

There are many studies that verify that meditation eases anxiety and mental stress.^[59]

Here's a mini meditation exercise that you can do anytime, anywhere, to help calm you down in just a few seconds. With your hands in front of you, line up the tips of the fingers of your left hand to the corresponding tips of the fingers of your right hand. Take 5 slow, deep belly breaths while pressing the fingertips against each other with medium force. Shake out your hands and relax them to your sides or your lap and take one last slow, deep breath.

Connect with friends

We live in a digital age where we can be tempted to replace person to person contact with phones and computers, especially if we're feeling vulnerable. But humans are social creatures, we crave feeling supported, valued and connected. Studies show that being socially connected increases happiness and leads to better health and a longer life. It helps overcome feelings of loneliness and isolation.^[60]

Make a list of the people you can turn to. These are people that you trust to support you and make an effort to contact them regularly. Reach out to them and ask for specific kinds of help. Remember, your friends can't read your mind and it's not fair to expect them to. And if you're working on a goal, such as trying to overcome anxiety and depression, having a friend to report to and keep you accountable can make all the difference in the world. The likelihood of getting new habits to stick, of following through on your assignments and reaching goals is remarkably higher when someone else is aware or

your goal or assignment and you set a time to report back to someone on your progress.^[61]

Replace rumination with positive affirmations

When we get caught in the trap of rumination, which is repeating negative self-thoughts over and over again, we have to do something to interrupt that cycle or it just keeps going.^[62] Rumination is so dangerous because studies show that people believe things that they hear a lot because they are familiar, and disbelieve things that they don't hear because they are unfamiliar. It is interesting because it has no basis in logic.^{[63], [64]}

This is why it is so dangerous when we repeat over and over in our minds things like: 'I'm not good enough,' 'I'm a failure,' 'Nobody cares about me,' etc. Even though there is no basis in logic for these statements, we believe them to be true simply because we repeat them to ourselves over and over again.^{[65], [66]}

There is a way to combat these beliefs using the same principle of repetition. By creating positive statements about ourselves and repeating them over and over it can create a new healthier positive belief system.^[67]

So if a thought keeps running through your mind like 'I'm not good enough,' we're going to replace it with another opposite and positive statement such as 'I am worthy and deserving of being loved, valued and appreciated. I am loved, valued and appreciated. I am good enough.' And repeat that over and over again.

It won't be easy however. When you say those things your subconscious will tell you that they're lies. Studies show that once we believe something, we instinctively defend and protect it without even being aware of it.^[68] But if we keep at it relentlessly and consistently, that power of repetition can retrain our brains to accept those things as true.^[69] Just keep going.

Pet the dog

If you're feeling anxious, stressed, depressed or lonely, one thing that might help is to spend some time petting a dog or cat.^[70]

Science shows that playing with or petting an animal can reduce stress and can also help us reduce feelings of isolation and help us feel more connected.^[71] Petting a dog or cat increases oxytocin production in the brain which lowers stress and increases feelings of happiness. It also decreases production of cortisol, which is a stress hormone, so it works in multiple ways to help you calm down and feel better.^[72]

Small act of service

Depression and anxiety tend to make a person retreat inward. Helping other people can help bring us outside ourselves. It can also help distract us from our own problems and think about something else. Studies have shown that people who help others have lowered levels of depression and anxiety.^[73] In fact, in the research study, service was more effective in making a positive difference in the way participants felt about themselves than making an effort to pamper themselves, or creating self-esteem goals.^[74]

Dark chocolate

J. K. Rowling was right on track when she used chocolate to help treat the unpleasant effects of the dementors on Harry Potter. It turns out that extra dark chocolate really does improve your mood and is great for brain health. While pure cocoa is best, this may be too bitter for anyone with a sweet tooth, so a good rule of thumb is to go for chocolate that is 85% cocoa or more. Basically, the darker the chocolate, the better it is for your brain.^[75]

Cocoa is high in flavanols which have antioxidant and anti-inflammatory properties, and reduce blood pressure. For a reference point, the darker the chocolate, the more flavanols.^[76]

So, the bottom line here is that eating dark chocolate is good for your memory, blood pressure, and your mood. It helps alleviate depression and also acts as an anti-inflammatory, which means that it is good for your brain.^[77]



Phase 1: Getting started

Overview and instructions for phase 1

Each day will include:

Diet Modification (complete any time during the day)

- Drink 8 glasses of water each day
- Eat 5 servings of fruits and vegetables
- Good quality vitamin B complex supplement

Morning routine (complete before noon) – this should take about 15 minutes

- Get out of bed
- Personal hygiene
- Personal grooming
- Align our body with power pose (90 seconds)

Daily tasks (complete any time during the day) – this should take about 30 minutes

- Connection with nature
- Reaffirm intention

Evening routine (complete before midnight) – this should take about 15 minutes

- Positive affirmations
 - I give myself permission to feel loved, valued and appreciated.
 - I give myself permission to heal, grow and progress.
 - I give myself permission to let go of disappointment, sadness, despair and fear.
 - I give myself permission to find solutions to my problems.
 - I give myself permission to feel hope and happiness.
- “I am” poster – 2 minutes
- Write 2 things you’re grateful for
- Write 2 successes

Beginning with the basics

For our morning routine in this phase we're going to start with the basics. The first step is to get out of bed in the morning.

Help with getting up – the 5 second rule

Getting out of bed can be challenging when you don't want to and have no motivation to face another day, but please don't hit the snooze button. A few more minutes of sleep may trick your mind to think that you don't need to get up at all. One technique that can help you when you are struggling with motivation to get up is to use the 5 second rule made famous by Mel Robbins.^[78]

She didn't invent the idea of counting down, but she did write a book on why it works to help us do the things we don't feel like doing. The 5 second rule is simple, it's like a countdown for a launch. If it's time to get up, but you don't want to, you can start counting. 5, 4, 3, 2, 1, and then get up (or you do whatever it is that you were supposed to do, but you don't feel like doing).

The idea behind the 5 second rule is simple: if you have an impulse to act on a goal, you must physically move within 5 seconds or your brain will kill the idea. Remember, you can't control how you feel, but you can always choose how you act. And starting the day requires action.

Help with overcoming grogginess – a few easy tips

- **Drink a glass of water**

There are a few simple things we can do to help us feel less groggy and become more awake and alert in the morning. One is to drink a glass of water. In the morning our brains are mildly dehydrated since we did not drink anything during the night. Studies show that dehydration affects brain structure and function. Filling back up on water can help overcome sleepiness and improve mood.^[79]

- **Brush your teeth**

This mindless activity not only helps with oral hygiene but can also give our minds a chance to become more alert as we begin moving our bodies.

- **Splash cool water on your face or take a cold shower**

That exposure to cold water stimulates blood flow and increases neurotransmitters in your brain. This can give you a small burst of energy and can even put you in a better mood.^[80]

- **Listen to upbeat, fast-paced music**

Studies show that brain waves actually synchronize somewhat to the pace of the music you're listening to; so upbeat songs help move the brain into a more active state.^[81]

- **Turn on the light**

Light is critical to regulating your circadian rhythm. When light hits your eyes, it stimulates nerve pathways that tell your brain that it's time to wake up.^[82]

- **Exercise**

Moving the body gets circulation going better which has a positive influence on the oxygen and nutrients sent to the brain.^[83] Doing a few jumping jacks or jogging in place can help us become more alert and shake away the sleepiness.

Personal hygiene and Personal grooming

Now that we're out of bed and awake, the next steps in our morning routine are personal hygiene and personal grooming. Taking a shower and getting ready for the day make a huge difference in the way you feel about yourself. Studies indicate that your grooming and the clothes you choose to wear effects your self-esteem, mood and confidence levels.^[84] Dressing well cheers you up and makes you feel more powerful.^[85]

So even if you feel like you just want to lounge around in pajamas, get dressed anyway. Style your hair, put on make up and make yourself look like you care about yourself. Do the actions first, and the feelings will follow afterwards.

Align your body with a power pose

Presenting yourself well is not just about the clothes, it's also about the person inside. Your body language speaks louder than your words. We're going to begin the day by aligning our body with a power pose. Put your chin up, smile (even if you don't feel like it). Pull your shoulders back, stand straight and tall with your hands relaxed at your sides or on your hips. Keep both feet pointing forward and keep weight even on both legs. This shows you have a firm solid foundation and that you're not a pushover. Hold this position for 90 seconds.

Science shows that doing these things will not only make you *appear* more confident and happy; it actually makes you *feel* more confident and happy. Charles Darwin was actually the first to hypothesize that there is a connection between body language and our emotions that goes both ways. We smile when we feel good, but we also feel good when we smile.^[86] Today that theory is called the facial feedback hypothesis and it has been verified in study after study after study. The physical expressions of our body language influence our emotional experience.^{[87], [88]}

Even if you don't feel like it, doing the actions will help increase those feelings. If we want to feel happy then we need to smile more. Smiling, even a fake smile, increases the production of mood-enhancing hormones such as dopamine, serotonin and endorphins.^{[89], [90]} If we want to feel confident then we stand tall and pull our shoulders back. Holding this pose for just 90 seconds increases the level of testosterone which boosts confidence, while decreasing the level of cortisol which lowers stress.^[91]

Diet modification

Another basic thing we're going to address is what we eat and drink. Although I won't be asking you to completely overhaul your diet, we will be making a few simple modifications

that are easy enough that anyone can do them. As a reminder of why we would want to do this, please review the information on pages 9-12. This is the plan:

- Drink 8 glasses of water each day
- Eat 5 servings of fruits and vegetables
- Good quality vitamin B complex supplement

Daily action steps (complete any time during the day)

In addition to doing our morning routine, each day we will be taking simple action steps. These can be completed any time during the day.

Connect with nature

The action step for this phase is to dedicate 30 minutes to connect with nature. My first choice would be to take a walk through some beautiful natural scenery whether that be in a park, along a beach, a river trail, or a mountain path, or just around the neighborhood.

If the weather permits take off your shoes and feel the grass or sand under your feet. This is supposed to be a sensory experience; the more senses you can engage the better. Feel the warmth of the sun, feel the cool of the breeze, and feel your body moving as you walk. Hear the birds, or the waves, or the rustle of the grass in the wind. Smell the flowers and the trees and see the beauty of nature around you. Research verifies that connecting with nature is healing.^[92] It helps us feel good. The more we can connect with it the better.

This activity will obviously vary depending on season, location, or current weather conditions. If you can't go outside and take a walk, then we'll just adapt and do the best we can. Be creative. What can you do to create an interaction with nature? If you need to be indoors you can do a mall-walk or use a treadmill and walk for 30 minutes while listening to headphones with the sounds of birds, waves, or other nature sounds.

Many grocery stores have a floral department. Walk around the store and then literally stop and smell the roses. If health conditions don't permit walking, then listen to a recording of nature and run your hands through a sand box to create a tactile experience, or if you don't have sand, you can fill a container with rice and sift it through your fingers. Just do the best you can.

Another possible connection with nature is to spend time with an animal. Science shows that playing with or petting an animal can reduce stress.^[93] It increases levels of the stress-reducing hormone oxytocin and decreases production of the stress hormone cortisol and helps overcome feelings of isolation and loneliness.^{[94], [95]}

If this is your best option, then just enjoy 30 minutes petting, playing with and interacting with your pet.

Repeat intention

We're also going to repeat our intention. Studies show that our intention and mindset influence healing.^{[96], [97], [98]}

Repeat with me, "My intention is to live in a state of mental and emotional wholeness. My intention is to live joyfully, vibrantly and abundantly. My intention is to love my life and to experience pleasure and delight in each day."

Evening routine (complete before midnight)

The evening routine consists of four easy steps. We're going to repeat some positive affirmations, spend 2 minutes looking at the "I am" poster included with this course, write two things that you're grateful for, and write two successes that you had today.

Studies show the benefits of a structured evening ritual. Doing a few simple consistent things can help reduce stress levels, improve mental health and happiness, and improve quality of sleep.^[99] Our routine will include some positive affirmations, images and writing to increase positive thinking which helps with stress management, reduces stress and reduces negative self-talk.^[100]

Positive affirmations

You will be repeating a set of positive affirmations three times each. Repetition is a powerful tool to change our thinking.^[101] Cognitive scientists describe a phenomenon called the “mere exposure effect,” which shows that people believe things that they hear a lot because they are familiar, and disbelieve things that they don’t hear because they are unfamiliar, regardless of actual facts or logic.^{[102], [103], [104]}

This is why it is so dangerous when we repeat over and over in our minds things like: ‘I’m not good enough,’ ‘I’m a failure,’ or ‘Nobody cares about me.’ Even though there is no basis in logic for these statements, we believe them to be true simply because we repeat them to ourselves over and over again.^[105]

There is a way to combat these beliefs using the same principle of repetition. By creating positive statements about ourselves and repeating them over and over it can create a new healthier positive belief system.^[106]

It won’t be easy however. Once something is added to your collection of beliefs, you instinctively defend and protect it without even being aware of it.^[107]

In other words, our brains fight to protect the information that we already believe to be true. If you already believe that you’re stupid and worthless and there is any information that contradicts that belief, you will automatically reject it to protect what your brain already believes to be “true.”

It will be an uphill battle to overcome those intact, but incorrect, beliefs. If you give a half-hearted attempt to overcome those old beliefs by doing occasional positive affirmations and declarations, it will actually backfire and make your original beliefs stronger. In order to win this war of beliefs, you need to be relentless and consistent. However, if you *do* want to feel worthy of love, belonging, happiness, confidence, success, and that you’re good enough then repetition is the means to retrain your brain to accept those things as true.^[108]

“I am” poster

You'll also be spending two minutes looking at and pondering about the “I am” poster included in this book. Combining visual images and words engages both hemispheres of the brain and facilitates improvements in reprogramming our patterns of thinking.^[109]

Gratitude and success

We're also going to work on developing and nurturing a sense of gratitude. Science proves that gratitude has multiple benefits including improving our physical and emotional health, increasing our happiness and reducing depression, improving self-esteem and improving the quality of sleep.^[110]

Finally, we're going to work on improving optimism and increasing a sense of satisfaction, self-worth and accomplishment by writing two successes that you had today. They don't have to be anything major; practice giving yourself credit for the little things that you do. Those things matter. Thinking positively and developing a sense of optimism are key components of effective stress management.^[111]

Confidence builds on successes. Typically, we don't give ourselves credit for the good things we do. We focus on our shortcomings, but it's time to start focusing on the positive. This is particularly important before going to sleep at night. Research shows that our brains are surprisingly active during sleep and often go over the last thoughts of the day.^[112]

If the last thought of the day is “What is wrong with me?” or the long list of things that we didn't get done during the day, then your mind goes over those things during the night and it reduces the quality of your sleep and begins the new day with discouragement. But if the last thought of the day is the positive accomplishments of the day then those thoughts can run through your mind during the night and actually build confidence levels while you sleep.^[113]



Daily charts for phase 1

Day 1	Completed
Morning routine – complete before noon	
Get out of bed (5 second rule if necessary)	
Personal hygiene	
Personal grooming	
Align your body with hero pose (90 seconds)	
Diet Modification – complete any time during the day	
Drink 8 glasses of water	
Eat 5 servings of fruits and/or vegetables	
Good quality B complex supplement	
Daily action steps – complete any time during the day	
Connection with nature (30 minutes) Outdoor suggestions (preferred): take a walk in a park, along a beach, a mountain path, or along a river trail. Take a walk around the neighborhood or walk the dog. Indoor suggestions: pet a dog or a cat, mall-walk, treadmill, grocery store. Sensory adaptation suggestions: listening to headphones with nature sounds, watching a nature program, sand box or rice box.	
Reaffirm intention: My intention is to live in a state of mental and emotional wholeness. My intention is to live joyfully, vibrantly and abundantly. My intention is to love my life and to experience pleasure and delight in each day.	
Evening routine – complete before midnight	
Positive affirmations (3 times each) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I give myself permission to feel loved, valued and appreciated. • I give myself permission to heal, grow and progress. • I give myself permission to let go of disappointment, sadness, despair and fear. • I give myself permission to find solutions to my problems. • I give myself permission to feel hope and happiness. 	
“I am” poster (2 minutes)	
Write 2 things you’re grateful for	
Write 2 success (big or small) that you had today	

Day 1

Drink 8 glasses of water

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Eat 5 servings of fruits/vegetables

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Gratitude – list 2 things you are grateful for

1 _____

2 _____

Successes – list 2 successes (large or small) you had today

1 _____

2 _____

Day 2	Completed
Morning routine – complete before noon	
Get out of bed (5 second rule if necessary)	
Personal hygiene	
Personal grooming	
Align your body with hero pose (90 seconds)	
Diet Modification – complete any time during the day	
Drink 8 glasses of water	
Eat 5 servings of fruits and/or vegetables	
Good quality B complex supplement	
Daily action steps – complete any time during the day	
Connection with nature (30 minutes) Outdoor suggestions (preferred): take a walk in a park, a beach, a mountain path, a river walk, a walk around the neighborhood, walk the dog. Indoor suggestions: pet a dog or a cat, mall-walk, treadmill, grocery store. Sensory adaptation suggestions: listening to headphones with nature sounds, watching a nature program, sand box or rice box	
Reaffirm intention: My intention is to live in a state of mental and emotional wholeness. My intention is to live joyfully, vibrantly and abundantly. My intention is to love my life and to experience pleasure and delight in each day.	
Evening routine – complete before midnight	
Positive affirmations (3 times each) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I give myself permission to feel loved, valued and appreciated. • I give myself permission to heal, grow and progress. • I give myself permission to let go of disappointment, sadness, despair and fear. • I give myself permission to find solutions to my problems. • I give myself permission to feel hope and happiness. 	
“I am” poster (2 minutes)	
Write 2 things you’re grateful for	
Write 2 success (big or small) that you had today	

Day 2

Drink 8 glasses of water

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Eat 5 servings of fruits/vegetables

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Gratitude – list 2 things you are grateful for

1 _____

2 _____

Successes – list 2 successes (large or small) you had today

1 _____

2 _____

Day 3	Completed
Morning routine – complete before noon	
Get out of bed (5 second rule if necessary)	
Personal hygiene	
Personal grooming	
Align your body with hero pose (90 seconds)	
Diet Modification – complete any time during the day	
Drink 8 glasses of water	
Eat 5 servings of fruits and/or vegetables	
Good quality B complex supplement	
Daily action steps – complete any time during the day	
Connection with nature (30 minutes) Outdoor suggestions (preferred): take a walk in a park, a beach, a mountain path, a river walk, a walk around the neighborhood, walk the dog. Indoor suggestions: pet a dog or a cat, mall-walk, treadmill, grocery store. Sensory adaptation suggestions: listening to headphones with nature sounds, watching a nature program, sand box or rice box	
Reaffirm intention: My intention is to live in a state of mental and emotional wholeness. My intention is to live joyfully, vibrantly and abundantly. My intention is to love my life and to experience pleasure and delight in each day.	
Evening routine – complete before midnight	
Positive affirmations (3 times each) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I give myself permission to feel loved, valued and appreciated. • I give myself permission to heal, grow and progress. • I give myself permission to let go of disappointment, sadness, despair and fear. • I give myself permission to find solutions to my problems. • I give myself permission to feel hope and happiness. 	
“I am” poster (2 minutes)	
Write 2 things you’re grateful for	
Write 2 success (big or small) that you had today	

Day 3

Drink 8 glasses of water

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Eat 5 servings of fruits/vegetables

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Gratitude – list 2 things you are grateful for

1 _____

2 _____

Successes – list 2 successes (large or small) you had today

1 _____

2 _____

Day 4	Completed
Morning routine – complete before noon	
Get out of bed (5 second rule if necessary)	
Personal hygiene	
Personal grooming	
Align your body with hero pose (90 seconds)	
Diet Modification – complete any time during the day	
Drink 8 glasses of water	
Eat 5 servings of fruits and/or vegetables	
Good quality B complex supplement	
Daily action steps – complete any time during the day	
Connection with nature (30 minutes) Outdoor suggestions (preferred): take a walk in a park, a beach, a mountain path, a river walk, a walk around the neighborhood, walk the dog. Indoor suggestions: pet a dog or a cat, mall-walk, treadmill, grocery store. Sensory adaptation suggestions: listening to headphones with nature sounds, watching a nature program, sand box or rice box	
Reaffirm intention: My intention is to live in a state of mental and emotional wholeness. My intention is to live joyfully, vibrantly and abundantly. My intention is to love my life and to experience pleasure and delight in each day.	
Evening routine – complete before midnight	
Positive affirmations (3 times each) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I give myself permission to feel loved, valued and appreciated. • I give myself permission to heal, grow and progress. • I give myself permission to let go of disappointment, sadness, despair and fear. • I give myself permission to find solutions to my problems. • I give myself permission to feel hope and happiness. 	
“I am” poster (2 minutes)	
Write 2 things you’re grateful for	
Write 2 success (big or small) that you had today	

Day 4

Drink 8 glasses of water

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Eat 5 servings of fruits/vegetables

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Gratitude – list 2 things you are grateful for

1 _____

2 _____

Successes – list 2 successes (large or small) you had today

1 _____

2 _____

Day 5	Completed
Morning routine – complete before noon	
Get out of bed (5 second rule if necessary)	
Personal hygiene	
Personal grooming	
Align your body with hero pose (90 seconds)	
Diet Modification – complete any time during the day	
Drink 8 glasses of water	
Eat 5 servings of fruits and/or vegetables	
Good quality B complex supplement	
Daily action steps – complete any time during the day	
Connection with nature (30 minutes) Outdoor suggestions (preferred): take a walk in a park, a beach, a mountain path, a river walk, a walk around the neighborhood, walk the dog. Indoor suggestions: pet a dog or a cat, mall-walk, treadmill, grocery store. Sensory adaptation suggestions: listening to headphones with nature sounds, watching a nature program, sand box or rice box	
Reaffirm intention: My intention is to live in a state of mental and emotional wholeness. My intention is to live joyfully, vibrantly and abundantly. My intention is to love my life and to experience pleasure and delight in each day.	
Evening routine – complete before midnight	
Positive affirmations (3 times each) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I give myself permission to feel loved, valued and appreciated. • I give myself permission to heal, grow and progress. • I give myself permission to let go of disappointment, sadness, despair and fear. • I give myself permission to find solutions to my problems. • I give myself permission to feel hope and happiness. 	
“I am” poster (2 minutes)	
Write 2 things you’re grateful for	
Write 2 success (big or small) that you had today	

Day 5

Drink 8 glasses of water

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Eat 5 servings of fruits/vegetables

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Gratitude – list 2 things you are grateful for

1 _____

2 _____

Successes – list 2 successes (large or small) you had today

1 _____

2 _____

Day 6	Completed
Morning routine – complete before noon	
Get out of bed (5 second rule if necessary)	
Personal hygiene	
Personal grooming	
Align your body with hero pose (90 seconds)	
Diet Modification – complete any time during the day	
Drink 8 glasses of water	
Eat 5 servings of fruits and/or vegetables	
Good quality B complex supplement	
Daily action steps – complete any time during the day	
Connection with nature (30 minutes) Outdoor suggestions (preferred): take a walk in a park, a beach, a mountain path, a river walk, a walk around the neighborhood, walk the dog. Indoor suggestions: pet a dog or a cat, mall-walk, treadmill, grocery store. Sensory adaptation suggestions: listening to headphones with nature sounds, watching a nature program, sand box or rice box	
Reaffirm intention: My intention is to live in a state of mental and emotional wholeness. My intention is to live joyfully, vibrantly and abundantly. My intention is to love my life and to experience pleasure and delight in each day.	
Evening routine – complete before midnight	
Positive affirmations (3 times each) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I give myself permission to feel loved, valued and appreciated. • I give myself permission to heal, grow and progress. • I give myself permission to let go of disappointment, sadness, despair and fear. • I give myself permission to find solutions to my problems. • I give myself permission to feel hope and happiness. 	
“I am” poster (2 minutes)	
Write 2 things you’re grateful for	
Write 2 success (big or small) that you had today	

Day 6

Drink 8 glasses of water

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Eat 5 servings of fruits/vegetables

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Gratitude – list 2 things you are grateful for

1 _____

2 _____

Successes – list 2 successes (large or small) you had today

1 _____

2 _____

Day 7	Completed
Morning routine – complete before noon	
Get out of bed (5 second rule if necessary)	
Personal hygiene	
Personal grooming	
Align your body with hero pose (90 seconds)	
Diet Modification – complete any time during the day	
Drink 8 glasses of water	
Eat 5 servings of fruits and/or vegetables	
Good quality B complex supplement	
Daily action steps – complete any time during the day	
<p>Connection with nature (30 minutes)</p> <p>Outdoor suggestions (preferred): take a walk in a park, a beach, a mountain path, a river walk, a walk around the neighborhood, walk the dog.</p> <p>Indoor suggestions: pet a dog or a cat, mall-walk, treadmill, grocery store.</p> <p>Sensory adaptation suggestions: listening to headphones with nature sounds, watching a nature program, sand box or rice box</p>	
<p>Reaffirm intention:</p> <p>My intention is to live in a state of mental and emotional wholeness. My intention is to live joyfully, vibrantly and abundantly. My intention is to love my life and to experience pleasure and delight in each day.</p>	
Evening routine – complete before midnight	
<p>Positive affirmations (3 times each)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I give myself permission to feel loved, valued and appreciated. • I give myself permission to heal, grow and progress. • I give myself permission to let go of disappointment, sadness, despair and fear. • I give myself permission to find solutions to my problems. • I give myself permission to feel hope and happiness. 	
"I am" poster (2 minutes)	
Write 2 things you're grateful for	
Write 2 success (big or small) that you had today	

Day 7

Drink 8 glasses of water

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Eat 5 servings of fruits/vegetables

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Gratitude – list 2 things you are grateful for

1 _____

2 _____

Successes – list 2 successes (large or small) you had today

1 _____

2 _____

Day 8	Completed
Morning routine – complete before noon	
Get out of bed (5 second rule if necessary)	
Personal hygiene	
Personal grooming	
Align your body with hero pose (90 seconds)	
Diet Modification – complete any time during the day	
Drink 8 glasses of water	
Eat 5 servings of fruits and/or vegetables	
Good quality B complex supplement	
Daily action steps – complete any time during the day	
<p>Connection with nature (30 minutes)</p> <p>Outdoor suggestions (preferred): take a walk in a park, along a beach, a mountain path, or along a river trail. Take a walk around the neighborhood or walk the dog.</p> <p>Indoor suggestions: pet a dog or a cat, mall-walk, treadmill, grocery store.</p> <p>Sensory adaptation suggestions: listening to headphones with nature sounds, watching a nature program, sand box or rice box.</p>	
<p>Reaffirm intention:</p> <p>My intention is to live in a state of mental and emotional wholeness. My intention is to live joyfully, vibrantly and abundantly. My intention is to love my life and to experience pleasure and delight in each day.</p>	
Evening routine – complete before midnight	
<p>Positive affirmations (3 times each)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I give myself permission to feel loved, valued and appreciated. • I give myself permission to heal, grow and progress. • I give myself permission to let go of disappointment, sadness, despair and fear. • I give myself permission to find solutions to my problems. • I give myself permission to feel hope and happiness. 	
“I am” poster (2 minutes)	
Write 2 things you’re grateful for	
Write 2 success (big or small) that you had today	

Day 8

Drink 8 glasses of water

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Eat 5 servings of fruits/vegetables

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Gratitude – list 2 things you are grateful for

1 _____

2 _____

Successes – list 2 successes (large or small) you had today

1 _____

2 _____

Day 9	Completed
Morning routine – complete before noon	
Get out of bed (5 second rule if necessary)	
Personal hygiene	
Personal grooming	
Align your body with hero pose (90 seconds)	
Diet Modification – complete any time during the day	
Drink 8 glasses of water –	
Eat 5 servings of fruits and/or vegetables –	
Good quality B complex supplement	
Daily action steps – complete any time during the day	
Connection with nature (30 minutes) Outdoor suggestions (preferred): take a walk in a park, along a beach, a mountain path, or along a river trail. Take a walk around the neighborhood or walk the dog. Indoor suggestions: pet a dog or a cat, mall-walk, treadmill, grocery store. Sensory adaptation suggestions: listening to headphones with nature sounds, watching a nature program, sand box or rice box.	
Reaffirm intention: My intention is to live in a state of mental and emotional wholeness. My intention is to live joyfully, vibrantly and abundantly. My intention is to love my life and to experience pleasure and delight in each day.	
Evening routine – complete before midnight	
Positive affirmations (3 times each) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I give myself permission to feel loved, valued and appreciated. • I give myself permission to heal, grow and progress. • I give myself permission to let go of disappointment, sadness, despair and fear. • I give myself permission to find solutions to my problems. • I give myself permission to feel hope and happiness. 	
“I am” poster (2 minutes)	
Write 2 things you’re grateful for	
Write 2 success (big or small) that you had today	

Day 9

Drink 8 glasses of water

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Eat 5 servings of fruits/vegetables

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Gratitude – list 2 things you are grateful for

1 _____

2 _____

Successes – list 2 successes (large or small) you had today

1 _____

2 _____

Day 10	Completed
Morning routine – complete before noon	
Get out of bed (5 second rule if necessary)	
Personal hygiene	
Personal grooming	
Align your body with hero pose (90 seconds)	
Diet Modification – complete any time during the day	
Drink 8 glasses of water	
Eat 5 servings of fruits and/or vegetables	
Good quality B complex supplement	
Daily action steps – complete any time during the day	
<p>Connection with nature (30 minutes)</p> <p>Outdoor suggestions (preferred): take a walk in a park, along a beach, a mountain path, or along a river trail. Take a walk around the neighborhood or walk the dog.</p> <p>Indoor suggestions: pet a dog or a cat, mall-walk, treadmill, grocery store.</p> <p>Sensory adaptation suggestions: listening to headphones with nature sounds, watching a nature program, sand box or rice box.</p>	
<p>Reaffirm intention: My intention is to live in a state of mental and emotional wholeness. My intention is to live joyfully, vibrantly and abundantly. My intention is to love my life and to experience pleasure and delight in each day.</p>	
Evening routine – complete before midnight	
<p>Positive affirmations (3 times each)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I give myself permission to feel loved, valued and appreciated. • I give myself permission to heal, grow and progress. • I give myself permission to let go of disappointment, sadness, despair and fear. • I give myself permission to find solutions to my problems. • I give myself permission to feel hope and happiness. 	
"I am" poster (2 minutes)	
Write 2 things you're grateful for	
Write 2 success (big or small) that you had today	

Day 10

Drink 8 glasses of water

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Eat 5 servings of fruits/vegetables

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Gratitude – list 2 things you are grateful for

1 _____

2 _____

Successes – list 2 successes (large or small) you had today

1 _____

2 _____



Phase 2: Building positive energy and releasing negative energy

Overview and instructions for phase 2

Each day will include:

Diet Modification (complete any time during the day)

- Drink 8 glasses of water each day,
- Eat 5 servings of fruits and vegetables
- Good quality vitamin B complex supplement.

Morning routine (complete anything before noon) – about 15 minutes

- Positive affirmations with music
 - I choose to feel loved, valued and appreciated.
 - I choose to heal, grow and progress.
 - I choose to see the positive in myself.
 - I choose to see the positive in my circumstances.
 - I choose to feel hope and happiness.
- “I am” poster with music
- Sing a song – print out lyrics
- Align your body with hero pose – 90 seconds

Daily tasks (complete any time during the day) – about 30 minutes

- Written release and burn **OR** visualization exercise (depending on the day)
- Reaffirm intention

Evening routine (complete any time before midnight) –about 15 minutes

- Positive affirmations (repeat from morning routine)
- “I am“ poster with music
- Write 2 things you’re grateful for
- Write 2 successes (big or small) that you had today

Instructions for Phase 2:

Diet modification continued

We will continue to modify our daily diet by making sure to get at least 8 glasses of water, eating at least 5 servings of fruits and/or vegetables, and taking a good quality vitamin B complex supplement.

Morning routine

The morning routine for phase two will build on the successes accomplished during phase one. Although getting out of bed, personal hygiene, and personal grooming won't be specifically mentioned, hopefully by now those basic things will be fairly automatic and we're ready to move forward. Some of the items in the morning routine will be familiar because you've already done them in the evening routine for phase one, but they will be slightly modified. Also we will be adding something new to inject a boost of positive energy into your day.

Positive affirmations with music

The morning routine will consist of repeating a set of positive affirmations three times. You'll notice that the affirmations have changed from the ones we used in the evening routine last week. Also we're going to add some background music while repeating those affirmations.

We've already mentioned the power of repetition in changing our thinking.^[114] We've also discussed how we tend to believe things that are familiar, and disbelieve things that are new and unfamiliar.^[115]

These two facts can conflict with each other as we try to repeat positive words and ideas, but since they're still relatively new, our minds keep trying to reject them. Music is a tool that can help us accelerate the process of learning a new way of thinking.^[116]

One block that we need to overcome is the interference of a section of our brain called the Reticular Activating System or (RAS).^[117]

The RAS acts like a filter in our brains to determine what is important and what can be safely ignored so we don't overload our mind with information. It is like a gatekeeper that chooses what information passes between the subconscious and conscious mind.^[118]

Our mind is already predisposed to reject new information that contradicts with our current beliefs so it would be helpful to have an extra boost to help us get past that RAS filter and allow this new positive information to be accepted. It turns out that music is just the boost we need.^[119]

Music, melody and rhythm can stimulate nerve impulses through the RAS.^[120]

Scientists have learned that the RAS is always listening, even when a person is sleeping.^[121]

Therefore, in addition to the power of repetition, we're going to incorporate the power of music to supercharge our positive affirmations. Since we're going to be talking, we don't want music that already has words; we want to choose background music like the orchestral film music played in the background of your favorite movie. This music is commonly known as "epic music."^[122] Just do a quick search on Youtube and you'll have numerous playlist choices available in an instant.

Different kinds of music can produce different kinds of emotions and we can use that to our advantage as well.^[123] Some music lets you know that the hero is about to do something, well heroic, and other music lets you know that everything is peaceful and going to turn out okay. Either of these might be just what you need as you repeat your positive affirmations. Perhaps you need a boost of confidence and power, or perhaps you're in the need of a calming reassurance that these new ideas are safe and that everything is going to be okay.

Repeat your positive affirmations three times with the epic music of your choice playing in the background. Try varying the sound of your voice, speaking confidently and

powerfully or softly and reassuringly to give variety and to wake up the mind which responds positively to variety.^[124]

“I am” poster with music

Keep the music playing to gain those same advantages while spending two minutes looking at and internalizing the “I am” poster included with this course. We’re engaging multiple regions of the brain with images, words and music.^{[125], [126]}

Sing a Song

Listening to music is incredibly powerful; scientist have found that music stimulates more parts of the brain than any other human function.^[127] And, according to neurologists, it affects our emotions and brings back the feeling of life when nothing else can.^[128]

But when you sing along it adds a whole new dimension including the stimulation of a tiny organ in the ear called the sacculus, which responds to the frequencies created by singing.^[129] The response creates an immediate sense of pleasure, regardless of what the singing sounds like so you don’t have to have an amazing voice to feel the positive effects of singing.

Singing on a regular basis can bring about amazing results. Participants in one study showed significant decreases in both anxiety and depression levels after one month of adding singing to their routine.^[130]

Singing has been scientifically proven to lower stress, relieve anxiety, and elevate endorphins which make you feel uplifted and happy.^[131] It helps relax muscle tension and decreases the levels of the stress hormone cortisol in the blood stream and can help take your mind off the day’s troubles to boost your mood.^[132]

These are some of the reasons why I’m going to ask you to sing each morning as part of your morning routine.

Play it loud and belt it out. I don't have the greatest voice, but when Shakira is singing alongside me, I sound pretty good. Allow the music to wash through you and feel the healing and invigorating effects immediately lifting mood and bringing relief. From my own experience, I can say that it really works.

Print out the lyrics so you can sing all the words and choose songs that have lyrics that have meaning to you personally. Here are a few suggested songs to help you create your own list: *Roar* by Katy Perry, *Try Everything* by Shakira, *Waka Waka* by Shakira, *Brave* by Sara Bareilles, *Unwritten* by Natasha Bedingfield, *Fight Song* by Rachel Platten, *Happy* by Pharrel Williams, *Better When I'm Dancin'* by Meghan Trainor, *On Top of the World* by Imagine Dragons, *Believer* by Imagine Dragons, and *You Are Loved* by Stars Go Dim.

Align your body with a power pose

The final step in the morning routine is aligning your body with a power pose. Put your chin up, smile (even if you don't feel like it). Pull your shoulders back, stand straight and tall with your hands relaxed at your sides or on your hips. Keep both feet pointing forward and keep weight even on both legs. Hold this position for 90 seconds.

Remember that science shows that doing these actions, even if you don't feel like it, will naturally stimulate the production of chemicals that help you reduce feelings of stress, while increasing feelings of happiness and confidence.^{[133], [134], [135]}

Daily action steps (complete any time during the day)

This week we'll be alternating between two different techniques designed to release negative emotions to lighten our mental and emotional burdens and reduce stress. One is called the written release and burn (WRB) and the other is a visualization exercise. We'll also be repeating our intention each day.

Written release and burn (WRB)

First I'll explain what I want you to do and then I'll explain why. Spend at least 10 minutes writing on one or more of the following prompts:

- I feel discouraged because...
- I feel depressed because...
- I feel hopeless because...
- I feel fearful because...

List everything you can think of. Just put the pen to paper and write whatever comes to your mind. When you're done, rip these sheets out of the book and either burn them (preferred) or tear them into tiny pieces and throw them away. If you don't have a fireplace, one suggested method is to place the crumpled pieces of paper into an empty coffee can (or other large metal can) and place the can outside on the porch and toss in a lit match.

Why we're doing this exercise

Research verifies the power of journaling as a tool to improve mood and manage symptoms of depression.^[137] Multiple studies suggest that journaling is good for your mental health because it makes you more aware; it can help bring thoughts and feelings to the surface. It also helps because as we write things down they feel more manageable. It brings things into perspective.^[138]

But why on earth would we want to burn it? Burning is symbolic of letting go. We don't want to bring up our fears and disappointments so that we can dwell on them and ruminate over them. We want to be free of them.

Utilizing symbolism can be another powerful tool in changing our way of thinking. Symbols are short cuts for our brains. It sends messages to our brain in a visual, concise way that brings added emphasis and impact.^[139] We are using several techniques that affect multiple parts of our brain so that we can maximize the potential positive benefits.

Something to think about

Visualize setting a dry sponge in a bowl of colored water. The sponge will immediately fill with the colored water. However, if the sponge is already soaked with clear, clean water and you set it in a bowl of colored water it will resist absorbing the colored water because it is already full. The sponge will remain clean despite being surrounded by colored water.

Likewise, when we are full of sadness, despair, and negativity we can be in the middle of a party filled with laughing, happy people and not be able to absorb any of the happy, positive feelings because we are already filled to capacity with sadness.

Part of the purpose of this exercise is to release some of those negative emotions so that there will be room for positive emotions. Transitioning from despair to joy requires a combination of releasing negative emotions and adding positive emotions.

Another analogy

You may be wondering why we would want to bring it up at all. Wouldn't it be better just to leave the past in the past? That is an excellent question, and the answer is "it depends." It depends on the intent of bringing it up. If the intent is to live in the past and drag up old wounds to fuel anger, blame, resentment, heartache, fear and pain, then it would indeed be better just to leave the past in the past. However, if the intent is to heal then this is an incredibly powerful and beneficial tool.^{[140], [141]}

Your experiences and the emotions attached to those experiences are recorded in your body.^[142] They do not dissipate over time. They remain forever, until you acknowledge them and release them in some way. Contrary to the old saying, "Time heals all wounds," it's more accurate to say, "Time buries all wounds." We may not be consciously aware of them, but they're still there. Studies have shown that they can even be passed to the next generation through DNA.^{[143], [144]}

Wounds buried beneath the surface are like a sliver embedded in your finger. It may not be seen from the outside, but it creates a tender spot that hurts whenever you touch near it. It becomes a “trigger” which is something small that sets off a larger (usually disproportionate) response. A person may unintentionally touch a tender spot not even knowing that it’s there, but the associated pain is tremendously real. Oftentimes people become sad or angry and lash out in response to that pain even though they may be unaware of the source of the pain, they just know it hurts.

If you have multiple slivers you can’t move without accidentally touching near one of the slivers and causing discomfort and pain, you become a ball of misery, where everything just hurts.

These hidden embedded wounds from the past won’t heal properly just by leaving them alone. These metaphorical slivers will continue to irritate and cause swelling and infection until they are removed. It might be uncomfortable and even painful to dig and get it out, but after they are removed and the wounds cleaned, then they can heal properly and completely. The written release and burn is a way to dislodge emotional slivers so you can heal.^[145]

Writing helps the mind recall experiences that you may have buried so deeply that you’ve forgotten about them. It also brings up the emotions attached to those experiences, but at this point, you can choose to separate the emotion from the experience and let it go. Separating the emotion attached with an experience won’t make you forget the experience, but you can then recall the experience without dragging along the emotional baggage with it. It is incredibly liberating.^[146]

Visualization

This week we will also be utilizing a visualization technique. Research shows that visualization and imagery techniques are helpful therapies to facilitate healing.^[147]

We're also going to include an element that has proven effective to innumerable hosts of people who have healed from addictions by following 12 step addiction recovery programs, and that is calling on a higher power.^[148]

The main benefit of using the words *higher power* is that it cannot be easily defined and people can interpret the concept as they wish. Most people interpret *higher power* as meaning a god, but it does not have to be interpreted this way. It is left up to the individual to decide how they wish to define it. There are no rules except that this power has to be greater than the individual. This makes it possible for a Christian, a Buddhist or even an atheist to work side by side to tap into the scientifically verified benefits that spirituality has on physical, mental, and emotional wellbeing. A large volume of research shows that people who are more religious/spiritual have better mental health and adapt more quickly to health problems compared to those who are less religious/spiritual.^[149]

When people believe in a power greater than themselves it can facilitate healing and make life easier.^[150] For example, when a person feels overwhelmed by a task and may not believe that they have the ability to defeat their problem alone, relying on a power greater than themselves can help give them the strength they need. When people believe in a higher power they will usually find it easier to forgive other people who have wronged them. It also becomes much easier to let go of resentments. Furthermore, as a person faces challenges, it can be a great source of comfort to believe in a higher power that is providing them with help. If a challenge becomes overwhelming, a person can hand it over to their higher power. This can be like lifting a great weight off their shoulders. When people develop the ability to let go it brings them peace of mind and contentment. Belief in a higher power can give people a sense of purpose and meaning in their life.^[151]

Preview

Here's a preview of the visualization exercise that we will be doing later on: I want you to close your eyes visualize each of your worries, concerns, problems, fears, etc. as heavy rocks that you are carrying in a large bag or backpack on your shoulders. Create as much detail as you can. Imagine the color, texture and feel of the bag. Fill in details such as

the scenery and the temperature. What does it look like? What does it feel like? What does it smell like? What does it sound like? Describe the size and appearance of your rocks. How does it feel as you heft their weight in your bag?

Imagine that you're traveling along a pathway bearing your burden. How do you feel? What is your gait? What does that look like? Suddenly your higher power appears alongside you. Your higher power offers to take your burden, but he will not force you against your will. You must choose to willingly offer the bag of burdens. What happens next? What does it look like when he accepts your burdens? How does he do it? What does it feel like as you release those burdens and allow him to take them from you? What message does your higher power want to share with you? What encouragement does he give? What advice does he give? How do you feel as you continue on your journey unencumbered by that suffocating weight on your shoulders?

Take a deep cleansing breath and allow the vision to slowly fade while you return to your natural surroundings.

Repeat intention

We're also going to repeat our intention because, as we already discussed, research shows that our intention matters.

Repeat with me, "My intention is to live in a state of mental and emotional wholeness. My intention is to live joyfully, vibrantly and abundantly. My intention is to love my life and to experience pleasure and delight in each day."

Evening routine (complete before midnight)

The evening routine for this phase will be the same as phase one. The only difference is that the positive affirmations have changed and we'll be adding music like we did for the morning routine.



Daily charts for phase 2

Day 11	Completed
Morning routine – complete before noon	
Positive affirmations with music (3 times each) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I choose to feel loved, valued and appreciated. • I choose to heal, grow and progress. • I choose to see the positive in myself. • I choose to see the positive in my circumstances. • I choose to feel hope and happiness. 	
“I am” poster with music (2 minutes)	
Sing a song	
Align your body with hero pose (90 seconds)	
Diet Modification – complete any time during the day	
Drink 8 glasses of water	
Eat 5 servings of fruits and/or vegetables	
Good quality B complex supplement	
Daily action steps – complete any time during the day	
Written Release and Burn (WRB) Spend at least 10 minutes writing on one or more of the following prompts: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I feel discouraged because... • I feel depressed because... • I feel hopeless because... • I feel fearful because... List everything you can think of. Just put the pen to paper and write whatever comes to your mind. When you’re done, rip these sheets out of the book and either burn them in a fireplace or empty coffee can or tear them into tiny pieces and throw them away.	
Reaffirm intention: My intention is to live in a state of mental and emotional wholeness. My intention is to live joyfully, vibrantly and abundantly. My intention is to love my life and to experience pleasure and delight in each day.	
Evening routine – complete before midnight	
Positive affirmations with music (3 times each) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I choose to feel loved, valued and appreciated. • I choose to heal, grow and progress. • I choose to see the positive in myself. • I choose to see the positive in my circumstances. • I choose to feel hope and happiness. 	
“I am” poster with music (2 minutes)	
Write 2 things you’re grateful for	
Write 2 success (big or small) that you had today	

Day 11

Drink 8 glasses of water

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Eat 5 servings of fruits/vegetables

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Gratitude – list 2 things you are grateful for

1 _____

2 _____

Successes – list 2 successes (large or small) you had today

1 _____

2 _____

Day 12	Completed
Morning routine – complete before noon	
Positive affirmations with music (3 times each) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I choose to feel loved, valued and appreciated. • I choose to heal, grow and progress. • I choose to see the positive in myself. • I choose to see the positive in my circumstances. • I choose to feel hope and happiness. 	
“I am” poster with music (2 minutes)	
Sing a song	
Align your body with hero pose (90 seconds)	
Diet Modification – complete any time during the day	
Drink 8 glasses of water	
Eat 5 servings of fruits and/or vegetables	
Good quality B complex supplement	
Daily action steps – complete any time during the day	
Written Release and Burn (WRB) Spend at least 10 minutes writing on one or more of the following prompts: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I feel discouraged because... • I feel depressed because... • I feel hopeless because... • I feel fearful because... List everything you can think of. Just put the pen to paper and write whatever comes to your mind. When you’re done, rip these sheets out of the book and either burn them in a fireplace or empty coffee can or tear them into tiny pieces and throw them away.	
Reaffirm intention: My intention is to live in a state of mental and emotional wholeness. My intention is to live joyfully, vibrantly and abundantly. My intention is to love my life and to experience pleasure and delight in each day.	
Evening routine – complete before midnight	
Positive affirmations with music (3 times each) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I choose to feel loved, valued and appreciated. • I choose to heal, grow and progress. • I choose to see the positive in myself. • I choose to see the positive in my circumstances. • I choose to feel hope and happiness. 	
“I am” poster with music (2 minutes)	
Write 2 things you’re grateful for	
Write 2 success (big or small) that you had today	

Day 12

Drink 8 glasses of water

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Eat 5 servings of fruits/vegetables

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Gratitude – list 2 things you are grateful for

1 _____

2 _____

Successes – list 2 successes (large or small) you had today

1 _____

2 _____

Day 13	Completed
Morning routine – complete before noon	
Positive affirmations with music (3 times each) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I choose to feel loved, valued and appreciated. • I choose to heal, grow and progress. • I choose to see the positive in myself. • I choose to see the positive in my circumstances. • I choose to feel hope and happiness. 	
“I am” poster with music (2 minutes)	
Sing a song	
Align your body with hero pose (90 seconds)	
Diet Modification – complete any time during the day	
Drink 8 glasses of water	
Eat 5 servings of fruits and/or vegetables	
Good quality B complex supplement	
Daily action steps – complete any time during the day	
Written Release and Burn (WRB) Spend at least 10 minutes writing on one or more of the following prompts: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I feel discouraged because... • I feel depressed because... • I feel hopeless because... • I feel fearful because... <p>List everything you can think of. Just put the pen to paper and write whatever comes to your mind. When you're done, rip these sheets out of the book and either burn them in a fireplace or an empty coffee can or tear them into tiny pieces and throw them away.</p>	
Reaffirm intention: My intention is to live in a state of mental and emotional wholeness. My intention is to live joyfully, vibrantly and abundantly. My intention is to love my life and to experience pleasure and delight in each day.	
Evening routine – complete before midnight	
Positive affirmations with music (3 times each) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I choose to feel loved, valued and appreciated. • I choose to heal, grow and progress. • I choose to see the positive in myself. • I choose to see the positive in my circumstances. • I choose to feel hope and happiness. 	
“I am” poster with music (2 minutes)	
Write 2 things you're grateful for	
Write 2 success (big or small) that you had today	

Day 13

Drink 8 glasses of water

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Eat 5 servings of fruits/vegetables

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Gratitude – list 2 things you are grateful for

1 _____

2 _____

Successes – list 2 successes (large or small) you had today

1 _____

2 _____

Day 14	Completed
Morning routine – complete before noon	
Positive affirmations with music (3 times each) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I choose to feel loved, valued and appreciated. • I choose to heal, grow and progress. • I choose to see the positive in myself. • I choose to see the positive in my circumstances. • I choose to feel hope and happiness. 	
“I am” poster with music (2 minutes)	
Sing a song	
Align your body with hero pose (90 seconds)	
Diet Modification – complete any time during the day	
Drink 8 glasses of water	
Eat 5 servings of fruits and/or vegetables	
Good quality B complex supplement	
Daily action steps – complete any time during the day	
Visualization: Visualize that your worries, concerns, problems, fears, etc. are represented by heavy rocks that you are carrying in a large bag or backpack on your shoulders. Visualize handing those burdens over to your higher power.	
Reaffirm intention: My intention is to live in a state of mental and emotional wholeness. My intention is to live joyfully, vibrantly and abundantly. My intention is to love my life and to experience pleasure and delight in each day.	
Evening routine – complete before midnight	
Positive affirmations with music (3 times each) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I choose to feel loved, valued and appreciated. • I choose to heal, grow and progress. • I choose to see the positive in myself. • I choose to see the positive in my circumstances. • I choose to feel hope and happiness. 	
“I am” poster with music (2 minutes)	
Write 2 things you’re grateful for	
Write 2 success (big or small) that you had today	

Day 14

Daily action step: Today's task is a visualization exercise.

I want you to close your eyes visualize each your worries, concerns, problems, fears, etc. as heavy rocks that you are carrying in a large bag or backpack on your shoulders. Create as much detail as you can. Imagine the color, texture and feel of the bag. Fill in details such as the scenery, the temperature. What does it look like? What does it feel like? What does it smell like? What does it sound like? Describe the size and appearance of your rocks. How does it feel as you heft their weight in your bag?

Imagine that you're traveling along a pathway bearing your burden. How do you feel? What is your gait? What does that look like? Suddenly your higher power appears alongside you. Your higher power offers to take your burden, but he will not force you against your will. You must choose to willingly offer the bag of burdens. What happens next? What does it look like? What does it feel like? What message does your higher power want to share with you? What encouragement does he give? What advice does he give? How do you feel as you continue on your journey unencumbered by that suffocating weight on your shoulders?

Take a deep cleansing breath and allow the vision to slowly fade while you return to your natural surroundings.

Restate your intention: My intention is to live in a state of mental and emotional wholeness. My intention is to live joyfully, vibrantly and abundantly. My intention is to love my life and to experience pleasure and delight in each day.

Day 14

Drink 8 glasses of water

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Eat 5 servings of fruits/vegetables

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Gratitude – list 2 things you are grateful for

1 _____

2 _____

Successes – list 2 successes (large or small) you had today

1 _____

2 _____

Day 15	Completed
Morning routine – complete before noon	
Positive affirmations with music (3 times each) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I choose to feel loved, valued and appreciated. • I choose to heal, grow and progress. • I choose to see the positive in myself. • I choose to see the positive in my circumstances. • I choose to feel hope and happiness. 	
“I am” poster with music (2 minutes)	
Sing a song	
Align your body with hero pose (90 seconds)	
Diet Modification – complete any time during the day	
Drink 8 glasses of water	
Eat 5 servings of fruits and/or vegetables	
Good quality B complex supplement	
Daily action steps – complete any time during the day	
Written Release and Burn (WRB) Spend at least 10 minutes writing on one or more of the following prompts: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I feel discouraged because... • I feel depressed because... • I feel hopeless because... • I feel fearful because... List everything you can think of. Just put the pen to paper and write whatever comes to your mind. When you’re done, rip these sheets out of the book and either burn them in a fireplace or coffee can or tear them into tiny pieces and throw them away.	
Reaffirm intention: My intention is to live in a state of mental and emotional wholeness. My intention is to live joyfully, vibrantly and abundantly. My intention is to love my life and to experience pleasure and delight in each day.	
Evening routine – complete before midnight	
Positive affirmations with music (3 times each) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I choose to feel loved, valued and appreciated. • I choose to heal, grow and progress. • I choose to see the positive in myself. • I choose to see the positive in my circumstances. • I choose to feel hope and happiness. 	
“I am” poster with music (2 minutes)	
Write 2 things you’re grateful for	
Write 2 success (big or small) that you had today	

Day 15

Daily action step: Today’s task is release pent up negative feelings through a written release and burn (WRB). Spend at least 10 minutes writing on one or more of the following prompts:

- I feel discouraged because...
- I feel depressed because...
- I feel hopeless because...
- I feel fearful because...

List everything you can think of that he/she did or does that triggers you to feel discouraged, depressed, hopeless or fearful. Just put the pen to paper and write whatever comes to your mind. When you’re done, rip these sheets out of the book and either burn them (preferred) or tear them into tiny pieces and throw them away. If you don’t have a fireplace, one suggested method is to place the crumpled pieces of paper into an empty coffee can (or other large metal can) and place the can outside on the porch and toss in a lit match. Make sure the fire is completely extinguished.

Day 15

Drink 8 glasses of water

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Eat 5 servings of fruits/vegetables

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Gratitude – list 2 things you are grateful for

1 _____

2 _____

Successes – list 2 successes (large or small) you had today

1 _____

2 _____

Day 16	Completed
Morning routine – complete before noon	
Positive affirmations with music (3 times each) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I choose to feel loved, valued and appreciated. • I choose to heal, grow and progress. • I choose to see the positive in myself. • I choose to see the positive in my circumstances. • I choose to feel hope and happiness. 	
“I am” poster with music (2 minutes)	
Sing a song	
Align your body with hero pose (90 seconds)	
Diet Modification – complete any time during the day	
Drink 8 glasses of water	
Eat 5 servings of fruits and/or vegetables	
Good quality B complex supplement	
Daily action steps – complete any time during the day	
Written Release and Burn (WRB) Spend at least 10 minutes writing on one or more of the following prompts: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I feel discouraged because... • I feel depressed because... • I feel hopeless because... • I feel fearful because... List everything you can think of. Just put the pen to paper and write whatever comes to your mind. When you’re done, rip these sheets out of the book and either burn them in a fireplace or empty coffee can or tear them into tiny pieces and throw them away.	
Reaffirm intention: My intention is to live in a state of mental and emotional wholeness. My intention is to live joyfully, vibrantly and abundantly. My intention is to love my life and to experience pleasure and delight in each day.	
Evening routine – complete before midnight	
Positive affirmations with music (3 times each) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I choose to feel loved, valued and appreciated. • I choose to heal, grow and progress. • I choose to see the positive in myself. • I choose to see the positive in my circumstances. • I choose to feel hope and happiness. 	
“I am” poster with music (2 minutes)	
Write 2 things you’re grateful for	
Write 2 success (big or small) that you had today	

Day 16

Drink 8 glasses of water

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Eat 5 servings of fruits/vegetables

--	--	--	--	--

Gratitude – list 2 things you are grateful for

1 _____

2 _____

Successes – list 2 successes (large or small) you had today

1 _____

2 _____

Day 17	Completed
Morning routine – complete before noon	
Positive affirmations with music (3 times each) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I choose to feel loved, valued and appreciated. • I choose to heal, grow and progress. • I choose to see the positive in myself. • I choose to see the positive in my circumstances. • I choose to feel hope and happiness. 	
“I am” poster with music (2 minutes)	
Sing a song	
Align your body with hero pose (90 seconds)	
Diet Modification – complete any time during the day	
Drink 8 glasses of water	
Eat 5 servings of fruits and/or vegetables	
Good quality B complex supplement	
Daily action steps – complete any time during the day	
Visualization: Visualize that your worries, concerns, problems, fears, etc. are represented by heavy rocks that you are carrying in a large bag or backpack on your shoulders. Visualize handing those burdens over to your higher power.	
Reaffirm intention: My intention is to live in a state of mental and emotional wholeness. My intention is to live joyfully, vibrantly and abundantly. My intention is to love my life and to experience pleasure and delight in each day.	
Evening routine – complete before midnight	
Positive affirmations with music (3 times each) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I choose to feel loved, valued and appreciated. • I choose to heal, grow and progress. • I choose to see the positive in myself. • I choose to see the positive in my circumstances. • I choose to feel hope and happiness. 	
“I am” poster with music (2 minutes)	
Write 2 things you’re grateful for	
Write 2 success (big or small) that you had today	

Day 17

Daily action step: Today's task is a visualization exercise.

I want you to close your eyes visualize each your worries, concerns, problems, fears, etc. as heavy rocks that you are carrying in a large bag or backpack on your shoulders. Create as much detail as you can. Imagine the color, texture and feel of the bag. Fill in details such as the scenery, the temperature. What does it look like? What does it feel like? What does it smell like? What does it sound like? Describe the size and appearance of your rocks. How does it feel as you heft their weight in your bag?

Imagine that you're traveling along a pathway bearing your burden. How do you feel? What is your gait? What does that look like? Suddenly your higher power appears alongside you. Your higher power offers to take your burden, but he will not force you against your will. You must choose to willingly offer the bag of burdens. What happens next? What does it look like? What does it feel like? What message does your higher power want to share with you? What encouragement does he give? What advice does he give? How do you feel as you continue on your journey unencumbered by that suffocating weight on your shoulders?

Take a deep cleansing breath and allow the vision to slowly fade while you return to your natural surroundings.

Restate your intention: My intention is to live in a state of mental and emotional wholeness. My intention is to live joyfully, vibrantly and abundantly. My intention is to love my life and to experience pleasure and delight in each day.

Day 17

Drink 8 glasses of water

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Eat 5 servings of fruits/vegetables

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Gratitude – list 2 things you are grateful for

1 _____

2 _____

Successes – list 2 successes (large or small) you had today

1 _____

2 _____

Day 18	Completed
Morning routine – complete before noon	
Positive affirmations with music (3 times each) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I choose to feel loved, valued and appreciated. • I choose to heal, grow and progress. • I choose to see the positive in myself. • I choose to see the positive in my circumstances. • I choose to feel hope and happiness. 	
“I am” poster with music (2 minutes)	
Sing a song	
Align your body with hero pose (90 seconds)	
Diet Modification – complete any time during the day	
Drink 8 glasses of water	
Eat 5 servings of fruits and/or vegetables	
Good quality B complex supplement	
Daily action steps – complete any time during the day	
Written Release and Burn (WRB) Spend at least 10 minutes writing on one or more of the following prompts: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I feel discouraged because... • I feel depressed because... • I feel hopeless because... • I feel fearful because... List everything you can think of. Just put the pen to paper and write whatever comes to your mind. When you’re done, rip these sheets out of the book and either burn them in a fireplace or empty coffee can or tear them into tiny pieces and throw them away.	
Reaffirm intention: My intention is to live in a state of mental and emotional wholeness. My intention is to live joyfully, vibrantly and abundantly. My intention is to love my life and to experience pleasure and delight in each day.	
Evening routine – complete before midnight	
Positive affirmations with music (3 times each) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I choose to feel loved, valued and appreciated. • I choose to heal, grow and progress. • I choose to see the positive in myself. • I choose to see the positive in my circumstances. • I choose to feel hope and happiness. 	
“I am” poster with music (2 minutes)	
Write 2 things you’re grateful for	
Write 2 success (big or small) that you had today	

Day 18

Drink 8 glasses of water

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Eat 5 servings of fruits/vegetables

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Gratitude – list 2 things you are grateful for

1 _____

2 _____

Successes – list 2 successes (large or small) you had today

1 _____

2 _____

Day 19	Completed
Morning routine – complete before noon	
Positive affirmations with music (3 times each) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I choose to feel loved, valued and appreciated. • I choose to heal, grow and progress. • I choose to see the positive in myself. • I choose to see the positive in my circumstances. • I choose to feel hope and happiness. 	
“I am” poster with music (2 minutes)	
Sing a song	
Align your body with hero pose (90 seconds)	
Diet Modification – complete any time during the day	
Drink 8 glasses of water	
Eat 5 servings of fruits and/or vegetables	
Good quality B complex supplement	
Daily action steps – complete any time during the day	
Written Release and Burn (WRB) Spend at least 10 minutes writing on one or more of the following prompts: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I feel discouraged because... • I feel depressed because... • I feel hopeless because... • I feel fearful because... List everything you can think of. Just put the pen to paper and write whatever comes to your mind. When you’re done, rip these sheets out of the book and either burn them in a fireplace or empty coffee can or tear them into tiny pieces and throw them away.	
Reaffirm intention: My intention is to live in a state of mental and emotional wholeness. My intention is to live joyfully, vibrantly and abundantly. My intention is to love my life and to experience pleasure and delight in each day.	
Evening routine – complete before midnight	
Positive affirmations with music (3 times each) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I choose to feel loved, valued and appreciated. • I choose to heal, grow and progress. • I choose to see the positive in myself. • I choose to see the positive in my circumstances. • I choose to feel hope and happiness. 	
“I am” poster with music (2 minutes)	
Write 2 things you’re grateful for	
Write 2 success (big or small) that you had today	

Day 19

Daily action step: Today’s task is release pent up negative feelings through a written release and burn (WRB). Spend at least 10 minutes writing on one or more of the following prompts:

- I feel discouraged because...
- I feel depressed because...
- I feel hopeless because...
- I feel fearful because...

List everything you can think of that he/she did or does that triggers you to feel discouraged, depressed, hopeless or fearful. Just put the pen to paper and write whatever comes to your mind. When you’re done, rip these sheets out of the book and either burn them (preferred) or tear them into tiny pieces and throw them away. If you don’t have a fireplace, one suggested method is to place the crumpled pieces of paper into an empty coffee can (or other large metal can) and place the can outside on the porch and toss in a lit match. Make sure the fire is completely extinguished.

Day 19

Drink 8 glasses of water

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Eat 5 servings of fruits/vegetables

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Gratitude – list 2 things you are grateful for

1 _____

2 _____

Successes – list 2 successes (large or small) you had today

1 _____

2 _____

Day 20	Completed
Morning routine – complete before noon	
Positive affirmations with music (3 times each) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I choose to feel loved, valued and appreciated. • I choose to heal, grow and progress. • I choose to see the positive in myself. • I choose to see the positive in my circumstances. • I choose to feel hope and happiness. 	
“I am” poster with music (2 minutes)	
Sing a song	
Align your body with hero pose (90 seconds)	
Diet Modification – complete any time during the day	
Drink 8 glasses of water	
Eat 5 servings of fruits and/or vegetables	
Good quality B complex supplement	
Daily action steps – complete any time during the day	
Visualization: Visualize that your worries, concerns, problems, fears, etc. are represented by heavy rocks that you are carrying in a large bag or backpack on your shoulders. Visualize handing those burdens over to your higher power.	
Reaffirm intention: My intention is to live in a state of mental and emotional wholeness. My intention is to live joyfully, vibrantly and abundantly. My intention is to love my life and to experience pleasure and delight in each day.	
Evening routine – complete before midnight	
Positive affirmations with music (3 times each) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I choose to feel loved, valued and appreciated. • I choose to heal, grow and progress. • I choose to see the positive in myself. • I choose to see the positive in my circumstances. • I choose to feel hope and happiness. 	
“I am” poster with music (2 minutes)	
Write 2 things you’re grateful for	
Write 2 success (big or small) that you had today	

Day 20

Daily action step: Today's task is a visualization exercise.

I want you to close your eyes visualize each your worries, concerns, problems, fears, etc. as heavy rocks that you are carrying in a large bag or backpack on your shoulders. Create as much detail as you can. Imagine the color, texture and feel of the bag. Fill in details such as the scenery, the temperature. What does it look like? What does it feel like? What does it smell like? What does it sound like? Describe the size and appearance of your rocks. How does it feel as you heft their weight in your bag?

Imagine that you're traveling along a pathway bearing your burden. How do you feel? What is your gait? What does that look like? Suddenly your higher power appears alongside you. Your higher power offers to take your burden, but he will not force you against your will. You must choose to willingly offer the bag of burdens. What happens next? What does it look like? What does it feel like? What message does your higher power want to share with you? What encouragement does he give? What advice does he give? How do you feel as you continue on your journey unencumbered by that suffocating weight on your shoulders?

Take a deep cleansing breath and allow the vision to slowly fade while you return to your natural surroundings.

Restate your intention: My intention is to live in a state of mental and emotional wholeness. My intention is to live joyfully, vibrantly and abundantly. My intention is to love my life and to experience pleasure and delight in each day.

Day 20

Drink 8 glasses of water

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Eat 5 servings of fruits/vegetables

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Gratitude – list 2 things you are grateful for

1 _____

2 _____

Successes – list 2 successes (large or small) you had today

1 _____

2 _____



**Phase 3: Building accomplishment
success**

Overview and instructions for phase 3

Each day will include:

Diet Modification (complete any time during the day)

- Drink 8 glasses of water each day,
- Eat 5 servings of fruits and vegetables
- Good quality vitamin B complex supplement.

Morning routine (complete anything before noon) – about 15 minutes

- Positive affirmations with music
 - I feel worthy and deserving of being loved, valued and appreciated.
 - I feel loved, valued and appreciated.
 - I feel grateful every day.
 - I feel hopeful and happy.
 - I feel safe and content.
- “I am” poster with music
- Sing a song – print out lyrics
- Align your body with hero pose – 90 seconds

Daily action steps (complete any time during the day) – about 30 minutes

- 30 minutes spent tidying, decluttering, cleaning, organizing, de-junking or working on unfinished projects
- One small act of service or kindness for someone else

Evening routine (complete any time before midnight) – about 15 minutes

- Positive affirmations (similar to morning routine)
- “I am” poster with music
- Write 2 things you’re grateful for
- Write 2 successes (big or small) that you had today

Instructions for Phase 3:

Diet modification continued

We will continue to modify our daily diet by making sure to get at least 8 glasses of water, eating at least 5 servings of fruits and/or vegetables, and taking a good quality vitamin B complex supplement.

Morning routine

The morning routine should look very familiar. It repeats much of what we did in phase 2 with the exception of modifying the positive affirmations.

Daily action steps

The daily task for this phase is designed to build accomplishment energy, continue to work on the process of letting go, and cultivate a sense of control and power over your life.

I'll explain what we're going to do and then I'll explain why we're doing these things.

30 minutes building accomplishment success

Each day you will set aside 30 minutes to build accomplishment success by gaining a sense of control in your life through tidying, decluttering, organizing and/or cleaning your physical environment.

Why gaining control matters

Consider this quote from the Alchemist by Paulo Coelho:^{[152], [153]}

"What's the world's greatest lie?" the boy asked, completely surprised.

"It's this: that at a certain point in our lives, we lose control of what's happening to us, and our lives become controlled by fate. That's the world's greatest lie."^[154]

There are some aspects of our lives that we really don't have control over, but there are so many things that we can do. We have a lot more power and control over our lives than some people think. Some physicians believe that depression arises from a belief that we're powerless to solve our problems, therefore the single most effective means to resolve feelings of depression is to find a way to tap into our own immense power to solve problems.^[155]

As we experience control and success in little things in our lives, our confidence grows. Our brains gain evidence that what we do does in fact make a difference. We feel more empowered and capable, and as we begin to trust ourselves we also begin to unlock our own inherent capacity to create solutions to our problems.^[156]

One task at a time

We're going to spend 30 minutes each day tidying, decluttering, organizing and/or cleaning some aspect of our physical environment such as our house, car or office. Instead of trying to do your whole house at once, focus on one room at a time. Or one closet. One drawer. Try not to think about the rest of the house until that task is done. Start with something small and manageable that doesn't require a lot of complex decisions. Choose something that can be completed in a short amount of time so you see immediate success. The task doesn't need to be completed in one 30 minute session either. We can work on one thing for 30 minutes each day until it's complete.

Here are some ideas of things you can work on during this 30 minutes dedicated to creating order in your physical environment.

Make your bed

As Admiral William McRaven taught in his famous speech to graduates at the University of Texas:^[157]

"If you want to change the world, start off by making your bed. If you make your bed every morning, you will have accomplished the first task of the day. It will give you a small sense

of pride, and it will encourage you to do another task, and another, and another. By the end of the day, that one task completed will have turned into many tasks completed. Making your bed will also reinforce the fact that little things in life matter. If you can't do the little things right, you'll never be able to do the big things right. If, by chance, you have a miserable day, you will come home to a bed that's made. That you made. And a made bed gives you encouragement that tomorrow will be better.”^[158]

Turn your bedroom into a sleep haven

This 30 minutes a day might be dedicated into turning your bedroom into a peaceful place that promotes rest. Watching television, working, and socializing should take place elsewhere. You want your mind to see your bedroom as a place of rest, not of worry, stress, or social activity. Removing electronic devices, creating order, and removing clutter will help create that peaceful place.

Decluttering our homes, decluttering our lives

When we create order in our physical world, it helps create order in our inner world. Often the state of our homes reflect the state of our lives. When there is disorder and clutter it is difficult to think clearly.^[159] Studies show that clutter leads to stress and anxiety for the following reasons:^{[160], [161]}

- Clutter makes it more difficult to relax, both physically and mentally
- Clutter constantly signals to our brains that our work is never done
- Clutter creates feelings of guilt and embarrassment
- Clutter inhibits creativity and productivity
- Clutter creates frustration when we can't find what we want or need quickly
- Clutter makes it difficult to focus because it bombards our minds with excessive stimuli which overwhelm our senses
- Clutter distracts us by drawing our attention away from what matters

As we clean out our closets, drawers, and homes from unnecessary items it helps clear our minds as well. Cleaning and organizing can be therapeutic.^[162]

Decluttering can serve as a kind of catharsis, or releasing of pent-up emotions. It can help you feel more in control and more independent. The act of decluttering is also shown to have a positive effect on your mental state, making you feel accomplished.^[163]

Donate items to goodwill

A popular recommendation states that if you haven't used or seen an item in the past year, and you haven't missed it, you don't need it. Give it away. Think about how those donated items will bless the lives of other people and congratulate yourself for the good you did. Decluttering also give a healthier, more appealing aesthetic and you, your family and your guests will feel more relaxed in your home.^[164]

Research shows that letting go of tangible items by giving them away or throwing them away can also help with emotional health.^[165]

Small act of kindness, compassion or service for someone else

For phase 3, rather than repeating our intention, we're going to focus on serving others. A small act of kindness may only take a few seconds or a few minutes, but research shows that helping others can relieve anxiety and depression.^[166]

Depression and anxiety tend to make a person retreat inward. Serving other people can help bring us outside ourselves. Studies have shown that people who make an effort to help others and focus on ways to make a positive difference in someone else's life not only lowered levels of depression and anxiety, but also experienced improvements in their relationships. In fact, service was more effective in making a positive difference in emotional health than focusing on ways to build self-esteem.^[167]

This is really good news and creates a win/win situation. When we turn our attention toward helping others, we make everyone feel better—ourselves included.

What are some specific ways to practice compassion for others? Being supportive of others. Having compassion for others' mistakes. Donating to charity. Taking a friend out to lunch or even graciously letting someone merge in front of you in traffic. How about a kind word or giving a complement? Our words are powerful, for good and for harm. Building others up with our words also builds our relationships with them. Avoiding doing things that are unhelpful to others. We can take care not to do things that make others' lives more difficult, like leaving a mess for them to clean up.^[168]

Evening routine (complete before midnight)

The evening routine for this phase will be the same as phases 1 and 2 with slight modification to the positive affirmations.

- Positive affirmations with music
 - I am worthy and deserving of being loved, valued and appreciated.
 - I am loved, valued and appreciated.
 - I love and value myself.
 - I am hopeful and happy.
 - I am safe and content.
- “I am” poster with music – 2 minutes
- Write 2 things you’re grateful for
- Write 2 successes – big or small – that you had today



Daily charts for phase 3

Day 21	Completed
Morning routine – complete before noon	
Positive affirmations with music (3 times each) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I feel worthy and deserving of being loved, valued and appreciated. • I feel loved, valued and appreciated. • I feel grateful every day. • I feel hopeful and happy. • I feel safe and content. 	
“I am” poster with music (2 minutes)	
Sing a song	
Align your body with hero pose (90 seconds)	
Diet Modification – complete any time during the day	
Drink 8 glasses of water	
Eat 5 servings of fruits and/or vegetables	
Good quality B complex supplement	
Daily action steps – complete any time during the day	
30 minutes gaining accomplishment energy: Spend 30 minutes tidying, decluttering, cleaning, organizing and/or de-junking your physical environment in your home, car or office.	
Small act of kindness, compassion or service for someone else – It can be as simple as a smile or a kind word. Do something to make someone else feel happy or to make the world a better place.	
Evening routine – complete before midnight	
Positive affirmations with music (3 times each) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I am worthy and deserving of being loved, valued and appreciated. • I am loved, valued and appreciated. • I love and value myself. • I am hopeful and happy. • I am safe and content. 	
“I am” poster with music (2 minutes)	
Write 2 things you’re grateful for	
Write 2 success (big or small) that you had today	

Day 21

Drink 8 glasses of water

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Eat 5 servings of fruits/vegetables

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Gratitude – list 2 things you are grateful for

1 _____

2 _____

Successes – list 2 successes (large or small) you had today

1 _____

2 _____

Day 22	Completed
Morning routine – complete before noon	
Positive affirmations with music (3 times each) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I feel worthy and deserving of being loved, valued and appreciated. • I feel loved, valued and appreciated. • I feel grateful every day. • I feel hopeful and happy. • I feel safe and content. 	
“I am” poster with music (2 minutes)	
Sing a song	
Align your body with hero pose (90 seconds)	
Diet Modification – complete any time during the day	
Drink 8 glasses of water	
Eat 5 servings of fruits and/or vegetables	
Good quality B complex supplement	
Daily action steps – complete any time during the day	
30 minutes gaining accomplishment energy: Spend 30 minutes tidying, decluttering, cleaning, organizing and/or de-junking your physical environment in your home, car or office.	
Small act of kindness, compassion or service for someone else – It can be as simple as a smile or a kind word. Do something to make someone else feel happy or to make the world a better place.	
Evening routine – complete before midnight	
Positive affirmations with music (3 times each) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I am worthy and deserving of being loved, valued and appreciated. • I am loved, valued and appreciated. • I love and value myself. • I am hopeful and happy. • I am safe and content. 	
“I am” poster with music (2 minutes)	
Write 2 things you’re grateful for	
Write 2 success (big or small) that you had today	

Day 22

Drink 8 glasses of water

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Eat 5 servings of fruits/vegetables

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Gratitude – list 2 things you are grateful for

1 _____

2 _____

Successes – list 2 successes (large or small) you had today

1 _____

2 _____

Day 23	Completed
Morning routine – complete before noon	
Positive affirmations with music (3 times each) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I feel worthy and deserving of being loved, valued and appreciated. • I feel loved, valued and appreciated. • I feel grateful every day. • I feel hopeful and happy. • I feel safe and content. 	
“I am” poster with music (2 minutes)	
Sing a song	
Align your body with hero pose (90 seconds)	
Diet Modification – complete any time during the day	
Drink 8 glasses of water	
Eat 5 servings of fruits and/or vegetables	
Good quality B complex supplement	
Daily action steps – complete any time during the day	
30 minutes gaining accomplishment energy: Spend 30 minutes tidying, decluttering, cleaning, organizing and/or de-junking your physical environment in your home, car or office.	
Small act of kindness, compassion or service for someone else – It can be as simple as a smile or a kind word. Do something to make someone else feel happy or to make the world a better place.	
Evening routine – complete before midnight	
Positive affirmations with music (3 times each) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I am worthy and deserving of being loved, valued and appreciated. • I am loved, valued and appreciated. • I love and value myself. • I am hopeful and happy. • I am safe and content. 	
“I am” poster with music (2 minutes)	
Write 2 things you’re grateful for	
Write 2 success (big or small) that you had today	

Day 23

Drink 8 glasses of water

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Eat 5 servings of fruits/vegetables

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Gratitude – list 2 things you are grateful for

1 _____

2 _____

Successes – list 2 successes (large or small) you had today

1 _____

2 _____

Day 24	Completed
Morning routine – complete before noon	
Positive affirmations with music (3 times each) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I feel worthy and deserving of being loved, valued and appreciated. • I feel loved, valued and appreciated. • I feel grateful every day. • I feel hopeful and happy. • I feel safe and content. 	
“I am” poster with music (2 minutes)	
Sing a song	
Align your body with hero pose (90 seconds)	
Diet Modification – complete any time during the day	
Drink 8 glasses of water	
Eat 5 servings of fruits and/or vegetables	
Good quality B complex supplement	
Daily action steps – complete any time during the day	
30 minutes gaining accomplishment energy: Spend 30 minutes tidying, decluttering, cleaning, organizing and/or de-junking your physical environment in your home, car or office.	
Small act of kindness, compassion or service for someone else – It can be as simple as a smile or a kind word. Do something to make someone else feel happy or to make the world a better place.	
Evening routine – complete before midnight	
Positive affirmations with music (3 times each) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I am worthy and deserving of being loved, valued and appreciated. • I am loved, valued and appreciated. • I love and value myself. • I am hopeful and happy. • I am safe and content. 	
“I am” poster with music (2 minutes)	
Write 2 things you’re grateful for	
Write 2 success (big or small) that you had today	

Day 24

Drink 8 glasses of water

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Eat 5 servings of fruits/vegetables

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Gratitude – list 2 things you are grateful for

1 _____

2 _____

Successes – list 2 successes (large or small) you had today

1 _____

2 _____

Day 25	Completed
Morning routine – complete before noon	
Positive affirmations with music (3 times each) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I feel worthy and deserving of being loved, valued and appreciated. • I feel loved, valued and appreciated. • I feel grateful every day. • I feel hopeful and happy. • I feel safe and content. 	
“I am” poster with music (2 minutes)	
Sing a song	
Align your body with hero pose (90 seconds)	
Diet Modification – complete any time during the day	
Drink 8 glasses of water	
Eat 5 servings of fruits and/or vegetables	
Good quality B complex supplement	
Daily action steps – complete any time during the day	
30 minutes gaining accomplishment energy: Spend 30 minutes tidying, decluttering, cleaning, organizing and/or de-junking your physical environment in your home, car or office.	
Small act of kindness, compassion or service for someone else – It can be as simple as a smile or a kind word. Do something to make someone else feel happy or to make the world a better place.	
Evening routine – complete before midnight	
Positive affirmations with music (3 times each) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I am worthy and deserving of being loved, valued and appreciated. • I am loved, valued and appreciated. • I love and value myself. • I am hopeful and happy. • I am safe and content. 	
“I am” poster with music (2 minutes)	
Write 2 things you’re grateful for	
Write 2 success (big or small) that you had today	

Day 25

Drink 8 glasses of water

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Eat 5 servings of fruits/vegetables

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Gratitude – list 2 things you are grateful for

1 _____

2 _____

Successes – list 2 successes (large or small) you had today

1 _____

2 _____

Day 26	Completed
Morning routine – complete before noon	
Positive affirmations with music (3 times each) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I feel worthy and deserving of being loved, valued and appreciated. • I feel loved, valued and appreciated. • I feel grateful every day. • I feel hopeful and happy. • I feel safe and content. 	
“I am” poster with music (2 minutes)	
Sing a song	
Align your body with hero pose (90 seconds)	
Diet Modification – complete any time during the day	
Drink 8 glasses of water	
Eat 5 servings of fruits and/or vegetables	
Good quality B complex supplement	
Daily action steps – complete any time during the day	
30 minutes gaining accomplishment energy: Spend 30 minutes tidying, decluttering, cleaning, organizing and/or de-junking your physical environment in your home, car or office.	
Small act of kindness, compassion or service for someone else – It can be as simple as a smile or a kind word. Do something to make someone else feel happy or to make the world a better place.	
Evening routine – complete before midnight	
Positive affirmations with music (3 times each) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I am worthy and deserving of being loved, valued and appreciated. • I am loved, valued and appreciated. • I love and value myself. • I am hopeful and happy. • I am safe and content. 	
“I am” poster with music (2 minutes)	
Write 2 things you’re grateful for	
Write 2 success (big or small) that you had today	

Day 26

Drink 8 glasses of water

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Eat 5 servings of fruits/vegetables

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Gratitude – list 2 things you are grateful for

1 _____

2 _____

Successes – list 2 successes (large or small) you had today

1 _____

2 _____

Day 27	Completed
Morning routine – complete before noon	
Positive affirmations with music (3 times each) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I feel worthy and deserving of being loved, valued and appreciated. • I feel loved, valued and appreciated. • I feel grateful every day. • I feel hopeful and happy. • I feel safe and content. 	
“I am” poster with music (2 minutes)	
Sing a song	
Align your body with hero pose (90 seconds)	
Diet Modification – complete any time during the day	
Drink 8 glasses of water	
Eat 5 servings of fruits and/or vegetables	
Good quality B complex supplement	
Daily action steps – complete any time during the day	
30 minutes gaining accomplishment energy: Spend 30 minutes tidying, decluttering, cleaning, organizing and/or de-junking your physical environment in your home, car or office.	
Small act of kindness, compassion or service for someone else – It can be as simple as a smile or a kind word. Do something to make someone else feel happy or to make the world a better place.	
Evening routine – complete before midnight	
Positive affirmations with music (3 times each) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I am worthy and deserving of being loved, valued and appreciated. • I am loved, valued and appreciated. • I love and value myself. • I am hopeful and happy. • I am safe and content. 	
“I am” poster with music (2 minutes)	
Write 2 things you’re grateful for	
Write 2 success (big or small) that you had today	

Day 27

Drink 8 glasses of water

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Eat 5 servings of fruits/vegetables

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Gratitude – list 2 things you are grateful for

1 _____

2 _____

Successes – list 2 successes (large or small) you had today

1 _____

2 _____

Day 28	Completed
Morning routine – complete before noon	
Positive affirmations with music (3 times each) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I feel worthy and deserving of being loved, valued and appreciated. • I feel loved, valued and appreciated. • I feel grateful every day. • I feel hopeful and happy. • I feel safe and content. 	
“I am” poster with music (2 minutes)	
Sing a song	
Align your body with hero pose (90 seconds)	
Diet Modification – complete any time during the day	
Drink 8 glasses of water	
Eat 5 servings of fruits and/or vegetables	
Good quality B complex supplement	
Daily action steps – complete any time during the day	
30 minutes gaining accomplishment energy: Spend 30 minutes tidying, decluttering, cleaning, organizing and/or de-junking your physical environment in your home, car or office.	
Small act of kindness, compassion or service for someone else – It can be as simple as a smile or a kind word. Do something to make someone else feel happy or to make the world a better place.	
Evening routine – complete before midnight	
Positive affirmations with music (3 times each) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I am worthy and deserving of being loved, valued and appreciated. • I am loved, valued and appreciated. • I love and value myself. • I am hopeful and happy. • I am safe and content. 	
“I am” poster with music (2 minutes)	
Write 2 things you’re grateful for	
Write 2 success (big or small) that you had today	

Day 28

Drink 8 glasses of water

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Eat 5 servings of fruits/vegetables

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Gratitude – list 2 things you are grateful for

1 _____

2 _____

Successes – list 2 successes (large or small) you had today

1 _____

2 _____

Day 29	Completed
Morning routine – complete before noon	
Positive affirmations with music (3 times each) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I feel worthy and deserving of being loved, valued and appreciated. • I feel loved, valued and appreciated. • I feel grateful every day. • I feel hopeful and happy. • I feel safe and content. 	
“I am” poster with music (2 minutes)	
Sing a song	
Align your body with hero pose (90 seconds)	
Diet Modification – complete any time during the day	
Drink 8 glasses of water	
Eat 5 servings of fruits and/or vegetables	
Good quality B complex supplement	
Daily action steps – complete any time during the day	
30 minutes gaining accomplishment energy: Spend 30 minutes tidying, decluttering, cleaning, organizing and/or de-junking your physical environment in your home, car or office.	
Small act of kindness, compassion or service for someone else – It can be as simple as a smile or a kind word. Do something to make someone else feel happy or to make the world a better place.	
Evening routine – complete before midnight	
Positive affirmations with music (3 times each) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I am worthy and deserving of being loved, valued and appreciated. • I am loved, valued and appreciated. • I love and value myself. • I am hopeful and happy. • I am safe and content. 	
“I am” poster with music (2 minutes)	
Write 2 things you’re grateful for	
Write 2 success (big or small) that you had today	

Day 29

Drink 8 glasses of water

--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

Eat 5 servings of fruits/vegetables

--	--	--	--	--

Gratitude – list 2 things you are grateful for

1 _____

2 _____

Successes – list 2 successes (large or small) you had today

1 _____

2 _____

Day 30	Completed
Morning routine – complete before noon	
Positive affirmations with music (3 times each) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I feel worthy and deserving of being loved, valued and appreciated. • I feel loved, valued and appreciated. • I feel grateful every day. • I feel hopeful and happy. • I feel safe and content. 	
“I am” poster with music (2 minutes)	
Sing a song	
Align your body with hero pose (90 seconds)	
Diet Modification – complete any time during the day	
Drink 8 glasses of water	
Eat 5 servings of fruits and/or vegetables	
Good quality B complex supplement	
Daily tasks – complete any time during the day	
30 minutes gaining accomplishment energy: Spend 30 minutes tidying, decluttering, cleaning, organizing and/or de-junking your physical environment in your home, car or office.	
Small act of kindness, compassion or service for someone else – It can be as simple as a smile or a kind word. Do something to make someone else feel happy or to make the world a better place.	
Evening routine – complete before midnight	
Positive affirmations with music (3 times each) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I am worthy and deserving of being loved, valued and appreciated. • I am loved, valued and appreciated. • I love and value myself. • I am hopeful and happy. • I am safe and content. 	
“I am” poster with music (2 minutes)	
Write 2 things you’re grateful for	
Write 2 success (big or small) that you had today	

Day 30

Drink 8 glasses of water

--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

Eat 5 servings of fruits/vegetables

--	--	--	--	--

Gratitude – list 2 things you are grateful for

1 _____

2 _____

Successes – list 2 successes (large or small) you had today

1 _____

2 _____



Phase 4: Building on magnificent momentum

Building on magnificent momentum

Hopefully you have experienced noticeable improvements during the past 30 days. I wish with all my heart that I could have titled this book, “30 days to *completely cure* depression” but neither the science nor my personal experience support a claim like that. 30 days is enough to make a measurable difference, but completely overcoming depression takes longer than that. The good news is that you have all the tools you need to build on the magnificent momentum gained during the past 30 days.

Please continue the journey toward wholeness. Please don't stop now or else climbing out of the hole of depression might be likened to playing a live action version of “Chutes and Ladders” where you climb up only to slide right back in. Scientific research shows that negative emotions, like those of depression, have addictive qualities that draw us back.^[169]

To imagine how that might affect the future, let's compare this situation with an alcohol addiction. While a normal person may be able to drink socially without concern, a person who is a recovering alcoholic may have to be careful and set limits on alcohol consumption for the rest of his or her life. Likewise, an emotionally healthy person may have a bad day once in a while, and it's just a part of life, but a person who is recovering from depression will always have to be careful so that they don't relapse into a deep pit of despair.

To stay mentally and emotionally healthy and strong, maintain a regular daily routine that builds positive energy and releases negative energy. I recommend creating a morning routine, a daily action step, and an evening routine. You can use this course as a template. You have the tools; you have the power. You can continue to create a life filled with joy, gratitude, success, peace and contentment. I believe in you.

God bless,
Linda



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Other works by Linda Bjork

“Crushed: A Journey to Wholeness”

(AKA Crushed: A Journey Through Depression)

An inspiring true story of triumph over despair so relatable and unflinchingly honest that you'll wonder if you're reading your own story and will start believing in your own happy ending. This captivating narrative empowers the reader with tools to revive hope and facilitate healing.

Here's what readers are saying:

“I couldn't put it down! I loved how the author showed greatness through trial and tribulation, and how real and raw her emotions were throughout the book. I laughed, I cried, and I celebrated as she conquered life throughout her journey! This book was life changing, deepening my vision as to how we can truly learn and become better from others experiences! Everyone who reads it will find some way that they can relate to the author's experiences and at the same time gain insight as to how to cope with the struggles of life! Such an amazing read! One that I will read over and over again!!!”

-Misty C.

“A very personal honest and insightful journey of self-reflection and emotional healing. We are all broken to some degree and need to be aware of some of the tools we have to find healing and mending the things that create a false and negative self-image. Linda has opened herself up in a very vulnerable way to allow you on that journey of healing in the hopes that you may find something of value in there to help with your healing. I did, and I hope you will as well.”

-Troy J.

“I couldn't put this book down. Linda is so real, so honest, and made it easy for me to identify things in my own life that I needed to process and let go of. She clearly explains her entire journey, from a lifetime of being depressed and suicidal to finding contentment and self-love. Great book!”

-Jane D.

“Heartbreakingly resonant for every invisible woman. A beautifully written display of how generational pain can lead to generational healing.”

-Sherrie C.

“Bjork takes readers through some very personal and real struggles and points them to the light at the end of the dark tunnel of depression. She provides readers with resources that allow them to emerge from that tunnel and embrace new levels of happiness.”

-Debbie E.

“It's a great read! I hooked from the start and read it in one sitting! I am so happy Linda chose to share her personal journey from such inner turmoil to finding hope and joy in life once more! It makes me wonder how many others may have similar false beliefs about themselves that are holding them back from the joy this life is meant to be. How grateful I am that she was courageous enough to face her struggles and challenge them! She is so open and descriptive of the healing process she took that anyone can benefit from her story.”

-Lindsay S.

“Linda is an amazing writer and has done a superb job with this book of self-exploration and mastery over a difficult and debilitating subject. Great and satisfying read.”

-Marie R.

“I had a hard time putting it down. This book caused me to think differently about others, and the secret pain that so many carry. But, by far the greater portion of this book is about the process of healing that took the author from crushed to truly recovering, and in the process healing many of her relationships as well. My favorite thing about this book is the detail it gives of the various tools she learned for recovery. It has caused me to think differently in ways that are affecting my own inner happiness. There are many people I know who I hope will read this book and be blessed by it.”

-David C.

“Pathway to Happiness: A Wellness Tool Kit”

Pathway to Happiness is designed to give people tools that they can use to retrain their minds to accept the truth that all human souls have value and deserve love. You are enough. You are enough right now as you are. If you don't currently believe that truth, then let's do something about it. I've walked the path and I can show you the way.

The solutions to your particular situation are actually already inside of you and I can help awaken your ability to start finding those answers.

“You Are Good Enough and I Can Prove It!”

Have you ever wondered if you're good enough? Well I have good news. The answer is YES and I can prove it! Sharing a message of hope using conditional logic. Conditional logic allows you to automatically make a decision about whether or not something is true based on whether or not certain conditions or criteria are met. If the conditions or criteria are met, then we know that something is true. The truth is that you are good enough. You meet the necessary conditions. You are good enough right now as you are. Let us show you the proof!

“30 Days to a Better Marriage”

You can have a better marriage in just 30 days! Everybody knows that a marriage can deteriorate, but not everybody knows that a marriage can be rejuvenated. This step by step guidebook includes a comprehensive plan with simple daily action steps that can change your relationship and your life! Whatever the current condition of your marriage, following the principles in this book will improve it even more. Don't you deserve a joyful, mutually fulfilling relationship? Then commit to spending the next 30 days to make it better because your happiness is worth it.

Innovative Joy – Books, courses, and blog by Linda Bjork

<https://innovativejoy.com>

I was just a little girl when I concluded that I was insignificant and unlovable and there was nothing I could do that would change those basic facts. That conclusion has been the core, the foundation, of my belief system my whole life. It was perfectly normal and I didn't give it a lot of conscious thought, it just was what it was and I couldn't even imagine thinking any other way.

Looking back to find the source and looking at it from an adult perspective with greater understanding, I realized that the conclusion I made as a child wasn't true. My entire belief system was actually built up around misunderstanding and misinterpreting events in my life. Making that discovery didn't automatically solve all my problems. It didn't make me instantly like myself or feel loved, valued and successful. It was more like pulling the rug out from under me leaving me toppled and confused. It didn't make sense, after all, I had decades of habits and tons of accumulated evidence that supported my old way of thinking. Everything I had always believed to be true had to be right, ...right?

I needed to make a choice about what I wanted to believe, because what you believe about yourself and about others, makes a huge difference. What you believe is more real to you than reality is real to you.

What is true, what is real, is that you have worth and deserve love. You don't have to do anything to earn it, it's just a given fact. All human souls have worth and deserve love. Second, you're stronger than you think you are. You have power to make changes in your life and you have the power to influence and lift those around you.

I can help you take simple, specific steps to reprogram your thinking which can help improve your self-worth, your success, your relationships, and your happiness. You deserve a joyful, abundant and meaningful life. Let me help you discover it.

Hope for Healing non-profit charity

<https://hopeforhealingfoundation.org>

Sharing a message of hope with the world. First, you have worth and deserve love. You don't have to do anything to earn it, it's just a given fact. All human souls have worth and deserve love. Second, you're stronger than you think you are. You have power to make changes in your life and you have the power to influence and lift those around you.

Two Good Things Bjork Family Blog

<https://www.twogoodthings.net>

At our house we eat dinner together as a family and everyone takes turns sharing two good things about their day. This simple tradition helps us stay connected. The Bjork Family Blog is about a normal family doing normal things, which in today's day and age is rather abnormal. We have a variety of interests from food and family to aviation and do it yourself projects. There's something for everyone.

Every family has a story. Welcome to ours.

Gluten Free – Dairy Free – Sugar Free

<https://www.glutenfreedairyfreesugarfree.com>

I was so overwhelmed when I learned that we had to follow a gluten-free, dairy-free, sugar-free diet to help our son. How I wished there was help for someone like me, who was just getting started, to work through that learning curve of change. This website is intended to be that lifeline of support for those who are following after me who may be struggling with making changes that perhaps we'd rather not make, but for one reason or another have to do it anyway. You will find recipes, tips and tricks, information on why people may need to follow this kind of diet, resources, hope for healing, and our story.