

7 TIPS TO CREATE A LIFE YOU LOVE

A step by step guide that helps you look at the most important areas of your life so you can grow and create the life you've always wanted but never thought was possible.



Dahmenah

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Introduction.....	4
1. Health, Wellness & Fitness.....	7
2. Your Spiritual Self.....	13
3. Finances, Abundance, Prosperity.....	16
4. Romance.....	19
5. Careers & Dreams.....	21
6. Relationships.....	23
7. Personal Development.....	25

Disclaimer:

This journal exercise is intended solely for the purpose of personal development only. In no way do the content, written exercises or techniques replace the expertise and services of a qualified health professional. The material contained within this journal exercise is not intended in any way to diagnose or treat any medical or psychological condition, nor does it constitute any type of medical or legal advice.

Use your discernment when reviewing the content of this journal exercise. You are totally responsible and accountable for any and all decisions and actions you make and take while going through this journal exercise.

Contact

www.discovergrowlove.com
www.facebook.com/dahmenah

Free Movies

<https://youtu.be/dd07mxhQ-5M>
<https://youtu.be/llPqjzepF4I>

All rights reserved. No part of this journal exercise may be reproduced in any form whatsoever, except for the inclusion of brief quotations, without permission in writing from the authors.

Copyright © 2017. Printed in the United States.

INTRODUCTION

Stress is killing us in so many ways. Some are succumbing more quickly than others. NEGATIVITY and not FOCUSING ON SELF in the right ways are at the root of the problem. FOCUSING ON SELF doesn't mean going to the beauty shop, nail shop or spa. While those things are nice and necessary, however, they are superficial.

I'm talking about SOUL WORK, getting truthful and honest about yourself and your life. Who are you really? What you believe about yourself is generally or who you really are. What is your TRUE PURPOSE in life? How can you give back to your community and the world? Do you really believe that your only purpose to work a 9 to 5 job that you hate just to pay your bills? If so, do you believe you will have a fulfilling life doing that or an unhappy one? If there was ever a time in your life you needed to be honest with yourself, this is the time.

This Journey will help you begin the process of learning to be honest with yourself so that you can CLEANSE THE NEGATIVITY from your life and start FOCUSING ON SELF in the right way. In most countries, women are taught to take care of everyone else, rather than their own needs. The problem with that philosophy is that if something happens to you because of stress or poor health, then who will take your place? Think about it.

The years go by so fast and at the end of it all, what type of life would you have lived if you keep down the path that you are currently on? Is it the kind of life you want your daughter or your granddaughter to live? If not, then why don't you feel like you are not worthy enough to have a life that you can be proud of?

So take the time out of your schedule to complete this exercise. Even just 30 minutes a day can change your life for the better but you have to be willing to do the work. So often we complain about our lives, but we don't do anything to make it better. Life isn't hard, yes there are things that happen, but in most cases it's your choices that create your good, bad or ugly reality. Right now you are about to make another choice, whether to read this and stop here or to continue on this journey of self-discovery. It could be the difference of your life completely changing over

the next six months or staying the same for the next six years.

Life is not about settling for whatever you can get, instead it's about designing your life the way you want it to be. But first, you need figure how you want it to be and this exercise helps you do just that. Please don't let age be the reason that you are settling for whatever or however your life is right now. If you are healthy, you can live the way you want to. Actress Betty White had an amazing career in her eighties. I met and interview Dr. Pat Allen for my documentary *HAPPILY EVER AFTER* when she was eighty, and this was years before she appeared on the Bravo Reality Series "The Millionaire Matchmaker."

It's your life why not make it the way you want it to be!

Peace & love always,

Dahmenah

FOCUSING ON SELF



Many women have a difficult time focusing on themselves, especially if they have a ton of “obligations” or commitments that they are unwilling to give up because it gives them a sense of “purpose” and keeps them busy. “The Superwoman Syndrome” is the habit of piling a lot of things on one’s plate in order to accomplish things, to look busy, to impress others with “how much I have to do”, or the inability to organize life’s pressures and tasks in a systematic way. Some women believe it’s selfish or self-centered to actually put attention on their lives and their needs. So what do we really mean by Focusing on Self? It means that you stop being a spectator in your life and start becoming a participant. It means that you stop walking around like a ghost and stop allowing the years to just float by until one day you look in the mirror and you don’t recognize yourself. It also means you must begin filling your Inner Well for yourself first. It means you choose to begin creating a sense of stability/calm, start by reviewing and examining Seven Core Areas of your life.

Unfortunately, you may think sacrificing or suffering for others is okay especially if you have children, but what you may not realize is that if you treat yourself badly you can’t be mad if others treat you badly. Also if you have daughters, you are teaching them how to treat themselves and how to let men treat them as well. We live in a time where anything you want is just a keyboard click away all you have to do is know yourself well enough to know what it is that you want.. This why this exercise is so important for you and your loved ones because if you become more physically, emotionally, mentally, financially healthier that energy and happiness benefits them as well.

SEVEN CORE AREAS

These are the seven areas that you need to focus on to help you create a LIFE YOU LOVE!

Get out your journal or print these pages before you get started. You're going to need a lot of room. There are 7 core areas and a number of questions for you to ponder in each one. Remember: you want to be in a place where you can focus your energy on what you're doing. If you can focus while sipping a latte in your local coffee house, then great. However, gauge your emotions before you go to a public place, just make sure you feel safe and secure wherever you decide to go to work on this section.



❖ Core Area #1: Health, Wellness & Fitness

This area helps you begin to observe how you are treating your body and general health. Often times, we as women, let our health and health warnings get out of control. Why? Why do we wait until conditions have reached critical mass before we seek treatment? It is neither self-loving nor compassionate to wait for your body to break down before choosing to recognize you need and should receive, help. Sometimes it's too late. Waiting always makes things worse. You are not making things better by putting off addressing the signs that the environment in your body is out of whack.

Pay attention to your body's signs and symptoms. In general, pain is a message that all is not well in your body. Look at your skin, your face, your eyes, your tongue and your hair. Listen inwardly to tension in your muscles. Observe your stress levels, digestion, elimination and rest/sleep patterns. Check yourself out thoroughly because denial is only an option for a short period of time. If you choose not to pay attention to your body's current health, you may eventually feel intense pain that will send you running to the emergency room. See a Naturopathic, Holistic or mainstream doctor if you feel things are "off" in your body. Often times we just need:

- "More Being" and "Less Doing",

- Better quality of sleep and good water,
- More rest time,
- More listening to the still, small voice within, and
- Healthier foods to eat and exercise/stretching to keep the body strong and flexible. If you don't take care of something it will eventually fall apart, no matter what it is.

When we see older women walking with canes, bent backs, sagging skin, we say to ourselves, "Oh that's just aging". No, that's just not taking care of your most precious gift, your body. Granted yes, some of those women have lived hard lives. However, today, that excuse can no longer be used when there are a plethora of resources available for you to take care of your body.

Many women dislike their bodies and some even hate them. You can hear them complaining about their bodies constantly, yet these same women do very little to nothing to change how they feel about their bodies or to improve the health of their bodies. Why? It requires self-esteem and strong motivation to take the steps needed to make any major changes in one's life. It requires us to confront the real reasons and issues behind that "Why?" However, ask yourself this: Isn't having a dislike for your body enough of a reason to do something about it? One major issue is this: most of us rationalize our feelings away to make ourselves feel better temporarily. We don't offer ourselves long-term solutions; only short-term patches to shore up conditions needing long-term solutions. Remember: as the years pass, issues like weight add up, which can become challenging to take off and keep it off.

For this section, review each question and ANSWER EACH ONE in your journal or on the sheets of paper.

- Do you exercise?
 - How many times a week and for how long?
 - Are your muscles tight and your body stiff making you inflexible?
- Are you struggling with being overweight?
 - Overweight being defined as being "above and beyond" what is considered

“healthy” for your height and age.

- What is your “ideal” weight?
 - Do you feel that it’s realistic and achievable?
 - If “Yes”, are you willing to make the changes needed to achieve that goal?
- Do you have difficulty breathing after walking a few flights of stairs or from your car to the front door?
- Is eating unhealthy food more important than my body’s health and well-being?
 - Do I use excuses to eat poorly?
 - Unhealthy food being defined as foods that are deep-fried, grease-laden, over-processed, pre-packaged, sugared up... You get the point. Do you use the excuse, “I grew up eating these kinds of foods”, or “it just tastes so good”?
- Do you eat fruits and vegetables daily? (The real kind, not the pop tart kind)
 - Do you use the excuse of being a “picky eater” to avoid consuming them?
 - Do you binge on sugar/carbohydrates (i.e. sweets, candy, coffee drinks, soda, potatoes chips, etc. aka, emotional eating)
- Do you like the way you look from behind? Don’t know? Go to the nearest full-length mirror and take a real look.
- Do you like the way you look in your clothes?
 - Do you like the way you feel in your clothes?
 - Do you buy clothes that fit you correctly or do you buy trends, not caring if they are too small or too tight?
 - Do you buy clothes only because they’re on sale or they look cute, not caring whether or not how they fit?

These questions are design to assist you with bringing balance to your life; without balance, happiness and peace are hard to achieve. If you find this area to be a struggle, you are in good company. Weight management is one of the toughest things to manage. Why? It requires constant focus and consistency; it also is about enjoying a life that is physical/fun instead of enjoying only food and activities that keep us from moving.

- There are a lot of questions in this exercise so it will take patience, honesty and commitment.
- Take your time; there is no time requirement so take breaks when you needed then come back when you are ready.
- First take a look in the mirror then write down what you see. ALWAYS BE KIND but HONEST to yourself.
- Answer the questions from your Journal exercise.

**REMEMBER: TAKE CARE OF YOUR BODY SO YOUR BODY
WILL TAKE CARE OF YOU.**

SEXUAL HEALTH

Stop for a minute and put yourself in a place of real honesty because this is a very important topic. All the topics are important, however your self esteem is a big part of your decision making process when it comes to sex. We only get one body so why do we treat it the way we do? Have you heard the saying, “Your body is your Temple?” That means your body is sacred so what you put in it or do to it or who you sleep with should be decided with care. The sexual behaviors you are exhibiting can really be dangerous to your health and the health of others. So answer the following questions in your journal:

- Do you choose to have unprotected sex with men you barely or don’t know?

- Does the prospect of getting an STD, HIV or something else give you pause when you are engaging in risky behavior that could compromise your health?
- Is the pleasure of unprotected sex more important than protecting your body from disease and harm?
- When was the last time you engaged in “risky behavior”? Risky Behavior is defined as you waking up the next day, burying your face in your hands and saying to yourself, “What have I done?”
- What were the thoughts that ran through your head when you woke up the next morning? How did you feel emotionally?
- Are you afraid to ask a man to take an HIV test? Have you taken an HIV test?
- Do you have a boyfriend that is in and out of jail or prison? Do you avoid having honest conversation about sex because of fear that he may leave you?

HIV is still on the rise in America and it has become an epidemic among women of color, however just because we don't hear about as much or choose not to read about it does not mean that it's no longer a concern. Why aren't we talking about it more? You've heard the reasons: it's an African problem, a Latin problem, an Indian problem, a Black problem or a prostitution problem. It seems to be every other countries and social group problem; however it's not my problem. If you believe that, you're in trouble and if you let a man use your body to pleasure himself without you knowing who you're dealing with and not using any protection, you may be dealt a very heavy blow. If you think its hard dating now, imagine dating with “HIV+” as a part of your introduction and Internet dating profile.

As women, we desire attention and there is nothing wrong with that, however sometimes once we receive attention we may feel that in order for it to continue we have to give him what he wants. Women have needs too but we also have to protect our self from mental, emotional and physical harm. The only way to truly do this is to be grounded in self-love.

- We recommend you take a walk before you tackle this subject. Begin to think back to your previous sexual encounters/relationships and allow them to playback like a movie in your head. Be the observer.
- Once you've finished your walk, eat something that you like then find a comfortable, non-distracting place to write.
- Remember this is about your behavior; he has to be accountable for his.
- Also DO NOT BEAT YOURSELF UP!!! If you discover that you did something in your previous relationships that you are not proud of, this is a learning experience and we all make mistakes; that is how we learn.
- Answer the questions from your Journal exercise.
- If you haven't been tested for HIV in awhile or never, now is a good time to take to do it. Fear is all around us, you don't have run from Fear you just have to not let it paralyze you. So get tested for everything TODAY for your health and the health of others.

Remember: A MAN CAN NOT LOVE A WOMAN WHO LOVES HIM MORE THAN SHE LOVES HERSELF!

PHYSICAL HEALTH/EMOTIONAL HEALTH

Furthermore, if you do not take care of your body, it cannot take care of you. Positive health is a proactive CHOICE. Your body is NOT a separate entity to be taken for granted. It houses your spirit 24/7 and automatically functions to keep you alive. Our bodies are designed to protect us from harm and to be the organic vehicle by which we experience life.

However, your body only functions optimally if you CARE about how you maintain it, how you treat your body and how you treat yourself. Failure to proactively to take care of your health opens you up to illness and disease, which will leave you with the question "why did this happen to me?" If you find yourself in this predicament, you must take the time to review how you have

been living your life and how you have been treating yourself and your body.

Take a moment and ask yourself these questions:

- Is having a man that is physically/emotionally abusive more important than my physical, emotional well-being and safety?
 - Do I believe that men show their love through abusive avenues and that it's okay?
- Is the anger and drama I am creating in my life worth more than my physical and emotional well-being?
 - Drama comes about when we forget to be kind, loving and giving to others and ourselves. Drama enters our life when we want to control the flux and flow of our lives and the lives of others. Drama robs you of your health and peace of mind.
- If you're looking for a foundation of peace and balance in your life, do you think having drama will give it to you? Think about trying to accomplish peace through war: not going to work.

❖ Core Area #2: Your Spiritual Self

Our spiritual self is often neglected. We hear the voice of our spirit, that quiet, sometimes screaming voice and then we promptly ignore it. We choose to stay separated and disconnected, believing that our minds and egos have all the answers to our challenges. When we are out of balance, our stress levels will rise. Our bodies will reflect the lack of attention we are giving to ourselves. Minds become cloudy and befuddled. Our energy becomes cloaked and heavy. We become angry and frustrated at the chaos in our life yet we don't slow down long enough to simply just LISTEN for the solutions.

- How do you connect with yourself on a deeper level? What techniques do you use?
 - Do you bother to connect with yourself on a deeper level at all? Do you believe it a waste of time?
- Do you ever sit in silence and listen to your inner voice? Do you heed its wisdom?

- When was the last time you connected to your inner voice?
- Do you ignore your inner voice because it's telling you something you don't want to hear?
- Can you tell if and when you are stressed or having health challenges or crisis due to stress? List your stress indicators in your journal. You know what they are.
 - How long have you been having your stress indicators? Don't be shocked if it has been months or maybe even years.
 - Do you know of ways to relieve your stress?
 - o Do you practice them or just read about them in books and magazines, promising yourself someday you'll get to them?
 - o What techniques do you use? Are they effective or is it time to seek new ones?
 - Do you meditate or have a way to center and ground yourself on a daily basis?
 - o Do you practice this consciously or by rote?
 - o Is it time to seek out another method, that is effective, useful and user friendly?
 - Do you practice yoga or any type of meditative, connecting, or grounding exercise? If "yes", what do you do? Is it effective or do you need to find other methods?

Stress is a silent killer. There is a gap of time between chronic stress and when disease/illness shows up in your body. Ten to thirty years may pass while you ignore the subtle signs that things are not well within your body. Not listening to our instincts or rationalizing them away leads to making mistakes that can cost us a lot of misery. This is an area that tends to be really out of balance in many women's lives. When we are out of balance, we are disconnected. This is the

connection you have with yourself as a member of this planet, the Universe and with your body. This connection is an essential building block for you to learn to LOVE YOURSELF.

The questions in this section maybe a little tough because you will need to revisit unpleasant and downright painful experiences. This journey will tests your limits but we have faith in you and you have faith in yourself.

- Make sure you have taken a break before starting this section.
- Do some type of soothing activity such as getting a massage, a pedicure or taking a bath?
- Remember, you may have hidden your wounds from others but not from your spirit.
- When you look in the mirror can you see those wounds or feel them in your body? If yes, it's our hope that these questions will start you on the road to healing them.
- Grab your favorite beverage
- Find a relaxing location such as your bed; you want to be comfortable at least physically when you do this exercise. Dealing with abuse is a difficult subject generally one most of us avoid.
- If you need someone to talk to, call someone on your support list or find a Health Professional.
- Answer the questions in your Journal exercise.

Our spirit is powerful, knowledgeable and always there when we needed. The problem is we don't always like what it says. Our spirit is generally not aligned with our mind and heart so therefore we are in constant conflict. We sometimes want what we want when we want it, even though it's not in our best interest, but our spirit knows best. A deep connection is needed to hear your spirit but you also have to be willing to hear it. After hearing it, you have to be willing to listen to it.

- There is a spiritual cleansing exercise in Step 3, repeat that exercise until you are really ready.

- Take a hot bath, listen to some soothing music and let it take you to another place. The purpose of the spiritual cleansing exercise and the bath is to teach you how to relax, to be one with yourself and be in tune with your surroundings.
- Unfortunately, we don't spend enough quality time with ourselves because we don't want to hear our spirit or be alone with our memories. It can be overwhelming. Being busy all the time does not bring about happiness or spiritual fulfillment just stress, anxiety and disease.
- After the bath make some herbal tea then find a nice quiet corner and write

❖ **Core Area #3: Finances, Abundance, Prosperity**

The concepts of Abundance and Prosperity are on the front page of so many magazines and books yet many of us are still unaware of the vital importance of The Law of Giving and Receiving. This topic is such a large body of work that we're only going to briefly touch upon it here. This law is always in effect in our lives, whether we are aware of it or not. When you wonder why you may be having difficulty in "getting ahead" in life financially, ask yourself where you have helped others "get ahead" financially. Consistently, altruistically, gratefully and humbly give. This is the key to receiving. Most of us learned we are supposed to receive first and then when we have enough we give. NO. Giving comes first. Giving first is a hard concept to swallow, but it doesn't have to be a lot of money it just has to be consistent and sincere.

Financial challenges are a vicious cycle that many people never figure out over their lifetime. Why? Because the habits, beliefs, fears and relationships people have with money is rarely acknowledged or changed. Many of these beliefs and fears came from our parents and their spending/saving habits. We absorbed their dialogues as children and because we had no other frame of reference, either their positive or negative habits became a part of our programming. There is also our religious indoctrination which says that money is the root of all evil or rich people are bad and because of this we either think having money is bad or people won't like us if we have money and so we make decisions accordingly based on these incorrect conclusions. Subconsciously many of us believe we are unworthy and undeserving; also known as low self-esteem. We hoard out of fear of not having enough. Sometimes we fear of having too much. Then out of anger and jealousy, some of us spend our time following, watching, reading,

admiring, and hating people with money.

Other influences on our beliefs and perceptions include the media and banking institutions. Credit cards and lines of credit that are offered, that we know we cannot afford and yet, we take them anyway. Society tells us the ways to get out of and pay off our debt and then turn around the next minute present us with temptation to get right back into debt. It's a vicious cycle of debt slavery that is considered "the American way." No wonder we're so confused about money. No wonder, financially, we are where we are today.

Take time to consider the following:

- Are you saving for emergencies or the future? Do you save any money at all?
- Do you give away money to others to increase your own abundant flow or do you hoard for fear of not having enough?
- Do you ever give your money, time or energy freely and unconditionally to your spiritual sources, charitable/grassroots organizations, family or even friends?
- Have you ever bought or do you buy things to impress others or to keep up with "The Jones'", even though you know you cannot afford it?
- Are you familiar with 401k, Roth IRA or any type of retirement program? Do you participate in them or do you have an alternate retirement savings program?
- Do you know the difference between assets and liabilities? Which do you have more of: assets or liabilities?
- Are you debt-free, close to being there or are you drowning in it without a lifejacket? Have you sat down and added up how much money you owe, so that you have a clear picture of the amount of debt for which you are currently responsible? Have you developed a plan for getting debt-free or sought out a financial advisor to assist you?
 - Are you living paycheck to paycheck?
 - Do you have any kind of system that helps you to track your expenses so that you are aware of exactly how much you're spending each week or even every day?
- Have you been honest and upfront about your financial responsibility to others? If you owe people money and have not repaid them, why not? Holding out of fear of having enough blocks your own abundant and financial flow.

If your answers to these questions are more “No” than “Yes”, keep in mind you could have some real problems in your immediate future if you don’t choose to change your relationship with money right now. It’s time to start healing this area of your life. Also think about these questions:

- What is your relationship with money? Do you get angry when you don’t have enough or get anxious when you have too much?
- How did your parents/grandparents/caregivers handle money? Are you following in their footsteps? This takes some observing of your own behavior and how you speak about money.
- What are your beliefs about money?
 - Do you have children? What are you teaching your children about money?

The issue of money and financials is a distastefully heavy topic for many women because many of us don’t understand about the energy of money or how abundance flows in, out and around our lives. If your mother instilled the idea that you always need to take care of yourself, more than likely she was not speaking of wearing your money, rather sharing, saving and investing. The responsibility, proper handling and managing money was not something that was taught to many of us. There may be plenty of you who have memories of momma telling you that a man is supposed to provide for you, that he’s the breadwinner in the family. This belief has left many women out in the cold when that man decides that he wants to move on to “greener pastures” and take his money with him or dies.

To be an empowered woman, you must have a stable and functioning financial base that will be able to support you when it is called upon. Take stock of where your finances are right now. This can be a shocking experience. However, you must begin at the beginning. Include all unpaid loans and any money you owe family and friends. This is the only way for you to begin taking control of your financial future. Living paycheck to paycheck is a recipe for disaster. Begin to educate yourself on money and finances. We live in an informational age and all you need is right in front of you on the Internet.

This subject matter is like all the others, it's based on what you think you deserve. We all have our belief system which was passed down from our parent(s) and most of us don't realize it. There is a strong possibility that you spend money the same way your mother does unless you make a conscious effort to be different. Money is fluid, its energy and it's alive and it's all around us; you just need to open your eyes to see it. Some people say money isn't everything; money is everything to the person that needs it badly and doesn't have it. Most of encounter times in our lives when we need money and we don't know how we are going to get; and during those times money is all we think about. People struggle in this area also because they don't know who they are, what they want or where they are going. So they spend money with a lack of this knowledge and it just becomes a vicious cycle. In addition, being envious of others who live abundantly will not bring you abundance; its negative energy and nothing can grow in negativity but more negativity.

- Talk to your mother and or father (if you can) about their money habits when you were a child and even today. If you not comfortable talking to them, then be an observer. Listen to their conversation about money, bring up money topics and see how they respond. This will give you insight into why you make some of the decisions you make.
- Review your current financial situation meaning how much you bring in, who you owe, how much you spend and how much do you save.
- Once you have done your research answer the questions from your Journal exercise.

❖ **Core Area #4: Romance**

If you are single but don't want to be now is a good time to find out why you are still single. One of the reason may be that you've buried past hurt so deep that you don't realize that it is there but

it's affecting your focus on your love life. Or maybe you know it's there and you are openly carrying the anger and other men can see it. The Blame Game makes a lot of women unhappy because it's always someone else's fault that caused them to be unhappy. Are you one of those women? If you cannot see the part you played in a bad relationship then you will repeat the same mistakes again and again.

For example:

- The man you chose may not have been the man you needed or maybe he was not a nice guy. So if you don't realize that you choose him, then you will just keep on choosing him again and again. At some point you will say to yourself, "why does this keep happening?"
- Do you know what kind of man you need versus what kind of man you want?
 - I need a man that won't try to change me
 - I need a man that will treat my son like his own child
 - I need a man that lives the same type of lifestyle that I lead.
 - I need a man that will understand and appreciate me for who I am

No one can take your soul, spirit, joy or love without your permission so you are always doing the choosing because you have the right and the power to say "no,"

Answer the following the questions in your journal or in the space provided below.

Why did your last relationship end?

- This is not about who fault is was instead write the issues that caused things to fall apart. For example: you both worked too much so you did spend enough time together. You like to go a lot of places but he didn't so you were not social match.

What qualities did the man in your last relationship have that made you attracted to him?

- Did he remind you of your father or another male figure?

Were the issues in your last relationship similar or the same as the ones in other relationships?

- The answer to this question can tell you if you are picking the same type of men or if you are creating the same type of drama.

How did the men your previous relationships treat you?

- Summarize each relationship to see if you there is a behavior pattern among the men. Then write how you responded to the negative or positive treatment to see if you also have a pattern. This information will help you to determine what has been going wrong so that you can work on fixing the problems. If you don't identify a problem then you don't know it's there.

Also check in with your self-esteem to see if you are sabotaging your relationships before it even get started. For example, if you are self-conscious about your weight, you may join a dating site and put old pictures of yourself on your profile. Another example, if you are ashamed of your living situation, you may lie to the guy in order to not be judge poorly by him. Be honest with yourself, like Dr. Phil always says, "You cannot change what you don't acknowledge."

❖ Core Area #5: Careers & Dreams

Most of us grew up with multiple ideas of what we wanted to be in life. Some of those ideas were slapped down and stepped upon by our parents. Then we were told we had to take a more "traditional" route to make it in life. Our parents, in their own way, had good intentions. They wanted to make sure we had a solid source of income and did better than they did. However, in the process, many of us had our creativity squashed, our visions blinded and our dreams ended up dissolving like mist in a hot rising sun. We relegated our hearts desire to a locked chest and shut it away out of sight. Then there were those of us who were allowed to live freely and were even encouraged, to follow our dreams no matter the cost. Which group were you in? Where are you now?

- What did you really want to be when you grew up?
 - Get your journal and list 5 imaginary lives you wanted to live no matter how ridiculous they sound. This exercise was introduced by Julia Cameron in her book, "The Artist's Way".
 - Now, list 5 lives or dream careers you desire to live now no matter how ridiculous they sound.

- Are you living one of those dream careers/lives or have you settled for something else?
 - If you settled for something else, why did you make the choice and how does that make you feel?
 - Would you be willing to make and take one solid step towards realizing that dream?
- Do you believe you deserve to have the life you REALLY want to live?
 - What are you really passionate about?
 - Are you so passionate about a particular thing that you would do it for free?
- Are you too comfortable at your job? Being too comfortable is the killer of dreams because you stop moving forward.
- Are you living your life to satisfy others instead of yourself?
 - Have you given up what you want to do because others told you it was a dumb, stupid, or unrealistic?
 - Are you doing the job you have now solely for the money to pay bills? Are you happy there or do you spend time wishing you were somewhere else?

Many people dislike or even hate their jobs and they feel stuck because of the pile of bills that are mounting at home. However, hating ones job and mounting debt does not stop most people from spending, which they need to do to change their situation. Remember to be honest with yourself because this is your life. If you don't like the way things are going, then it's time to make firm changes. You must live your life your way and for yourself. Anything else is living a lie.

We are taught to go to school and get a job so we can take care of ourselves. Our dreams come from our interests and most of the time they are not fostered by the school system or those around us. So the few people who actually live their dreams took a leap of faith when the odds were against them and would not give up. There are plenty of stories of struggle that you have probably heard and you may have even said to yourself that you would never do that. To accomplish any dream it requires sacrifice; if you not prepared to sacrifice then you may not want it badly enough. Sacrifice does not always have to be huge, there are small ones like spending less money on going out and more on your dream, spending less time watching TV and spending more time on your dream.

- Some of our high school dreams are not possible today but they may be able to be rework or they may have changed overtime.
- If you wrote in a diary during your childhood and still have it, pull it out and take a walk down memory lane. It will put you in a dreamer state of mind because when we are kids we think anything is possible. It is in our adult years when we are introduced to the word “unrealistic”, that word diminishes creativity, fun and excitement.
- Think about your dreams or career goals as they are right now.
- There is no need to share your dreams/goals with others unless they are positive, supportive people.
- Then answer the questions from your Journal exercise.

Don't let FEAR keep you where you are if you don't want to be there!

❖ Core Area #6: Relationships

This area examines relationships with people other than intimate/romantic ones. These are your family members, friends, business associates and co-workers. These relationships tend to make up a much larger part of your life than intimate ones will. You're with your co-workers 8 to 10 hours a day at your job. You may live with family or see them frequently for get-togethers and outings, same for your friends. The strength or weakness of the relationship you have with all of these people affects may affect other areas of your life. Acts of kindness towards others and speaking kind words about others says more about you and your character than anything else you may do.

Unfortunately, many of us take the people in our lives for granted so we don't spend enough time nurturing our relationships. We forget that nothing lasts forever. However, we sometimes treat the people that we love like they will live forever. Why? Maybe some of us feel that work is more important than family and friends, or maybe there is a grudge that is left unsettled and it's used as an excuse not to call, write or visit. Perhaps this is one of the causes for why people in romantic relationships have a hard time lasting: all relationships require effort to get going, be

maintained and to become deeper. If you are unwilling to put in the work required, do not be upset if others don't either. Someone has to take the first step in mending or maintaining any relationship. If someone has the courage to step up, the other person (s) will usually follow. There may be some forgiving to do in this area if you have not already done it in the forgiveness exercise. Don't let the years or people pass by without remember that they were here. Ask yourself the following:

- Do you have respectful and generally peaceful relationships with your friends, family members and co-workers or are you constantly at odds with them?
- How do you treat your co-workers and how do they treat you?
- Do you have supportive friends or friends who support you when it's convenient for them?
- How do you make others feel when they are around you? Do people disappear when you show up or are they visibly glad to see you? Are you easy to speak with or are you a nagger or know-it-all?
- Do you speak respectfully of others or do you gossip and rip them down with your words?

Life is always shorter than we think so we shouldn't neglect our loved ones. We know that sometimes your relationships with them are less than perfect but they are worth the effort. Unless there are problems stemming from abuse, then that is a separate matter that must be handled by a professional. There are unfortunate times where friends may not be in your best interest anymore because they may be exhibiting negative behaviors or talking very negatively thereby causing the need for separation or dissolution of the friendship.

- Make a list of your friends and see whether or not your friendship is where you want it to be. Then make a decision whether to keep the relationship improve it or terminate it.
- Then think about the family members you would like to repair your relationships with and come up with some creative ideas. For example, throw a barbeque and reminisce

about the good times. Bring things that you two or three did together and how you miss the closeness.

- Life is always shorter than you think so don't let pettiness or having to be right come between you and someone you love.
- Answer the questions from your Journal exercise.

**Remember there are things in this world that cannot be replaced,
people and time.**

❖ Core Area#7: Personal Development

Personal development is a lifelong adventure. When we stop evolving, we stop living. Learning new skills keeps your brain flexible and creates new neuron pathways. It keeps our minds young and our spirits lively. Consider and answer the following:

- Is there a special skill or skills you would like to learn? What's stopping you? Money? Time? Other excuses? Get out your journal and list them so you can see them on paper.
- Take one skill you want to learn and research it.
 - Where is it taught? Anywhere local?
 - How much does it cost? Do they offer payment plans? Try emailing a few friends with your interest; you may be surprised at who and what people know, including the friends you thought you knew!
 - You are not afraid, are you? Where there's a will, there's a way...
- Are there things you would like to improve about yourself that may help you get to the Next Level at work, at play or to catch the man of your dreams?
- Do you need to improve your level of confidence, self-esteem, self-worth and deservedness in order to obtain your goals?
- Do you need to learn better communication & listening skills?

To improve you takes constant care, work and focusing on self and on your life goals. Loving

yourself is at the heart of Personal Development. It's the willingness to be open, to learn and to evolve. It's sad when we hear women giving up because they lack the courage to try something new, even something that they said they want to do, learn or experience. We know you've heard the sayings, "talk is cheap" and "actions speak louder than words". It's better not to talk about something if you don't have the drive to do it since people tend to remember what you say. We all have friends, family members and associates that spend large amounts of time talking about what they are going to do; yet that's all they seem to do. We all want to say, "Shut up already, you are never going to do that". If you are that person who constantly talks about what they're going to and you never get around to it, either learn to follow through with your word or be a grown-up and remain silent.

These 7 core areas are just a few sections of your life that will need to be reviewed, examined and probably improved for you to have a more fulfilled life. These are self-reflection questions rather than "who to blame" questions. The examples are universal and most of us are deficient in one or more areas. More often than not, women neglect to address and heal areas of our life that need working on. We're more into fixing others problems than our own.

For many women, being a giver usually means taking from one's self to give to others. Nature and the universe so abundantly give to us; we must take the time to do the same for ourselves. Often we don't give ourselves time and space to just BE. The question is: why does one have to take in order to give? If a cup is full, it has plenty to share versus a cup that is empty. So fill your cup first before you share what you don't have.

Personal development should be fun, this is where you get to try new things like learn another language, how to play the guitar or how to swim. If all you do is work, where is the fun in that? Comfort zones are the killer of dreams and fun, and just because your friends won't do anything different does mean you can't. There is comfort in being a follower but there is strength, courage and freedom when you walk your own path. Today we spend a lot of time doing nothing, so just take a plunge into unfamiliar waters and see where they lead you. Who knows, the swim instructor could be the man of your dreams.

- Watch your favorite adventure story or a movie that inspires you to live above your comfort zone.

- Then dream big and write down everything you thought about trying.
- If you want to improve a skill you already possess there's no better time than the present.
- This is your life; live it above the rim. What's above the rim, like there is no tomorrow, and not like everyone else you know.
- Fear will keep you where you are but courage will take you to new heights.
- Answer the questions from your Journal exercise.

Don't let People tell you that this is all life has to offer YOU. LIFE will OFFER you anything YOU ALLOW it to OFFER YOU.

YEAR-IN-REVIEW

At the end of every year, you may want to make it a point to do a "Year-In-Review", which is to write down in your journal everything you accomplished throughout the year, no matter how small it seems. Just go month by month. This exercise can be a really eye-opening experience because if you didn't accomplish much, you will know exactly how much time you have been wasting throughout the year as well. This will allow you to readjust for the NEW YEAR to get more accomplished.

Or, if you don't want to wait till the New Year, do a mid-year review in June.

This will give you an opportunity to make a "Mid-Year Adjustment". You can also do a quarterly or even a monthly review, especially if you have set specific goals and want to make sure you're still on track. There is no wrong way. Just make sure it's productive and doesn't become a burden.

DISCOVER SHEET EXERCISE

THE 30-DAY REVIEW

PART 1.

We're going to do a bit more digging in the 7 core areas, except we're going to add another area:

Creativity & Play. **So, in the following table you see 8 areas in total.** Give yourself 20 minutes to do this exercise so you don't over think it. You are going to do a 30-day Review. Often times we are completely unconscious and oblivious to our behaviors and habits. So in the table below you're going to write, just the facts, what you did in each area during the last 30 days.

For example, if you walked twice in 30 days, under "Health & Fitness" you're going to write, "Walked twice, 30 minutes, 2 miles". Another example, if you paid off a debt, you're going to write that under the "Finances" heading. Another example, if you had unprotected sex during this time, you're going to put that under "Health, Wellness & Fitness". Starting to make sense? Some of your facts will fit under more than one category. Go ahead and write them down. **Remember: Only put the facts.** The purpose of this exercise is so you can begin to see, on paper:

- What's been happening in your life,
- Some of the choices you have been making and whether or not you like them,
- Some of the behaviors you have been engaging in and whether or not they serve you, and
- If you are treating yourself lovingly and compassionately.

Once you begin seeing your life in front of you, on paper, it may give you pause as to how consciously or unconsciously you may be going through your days (and nights). Once you see this data in front of you, it can assist you in opting to make much needed changes in your behavior, mindset and belief systems to begin shifting your outer world circumstances, moving you in a healthier, more balanced direction.

OPTIONS: Make copies of the sheet on page 74 before doing this exercise. You will be using it for more than one Step. You can also get a large piece of paper so that you have more room to record your information.



**“To keep the body in good health is a duty...
Otherwise we shall not be able to keep our mind strong and clear.”
~ Buddha**

1. HEALTH, WELLNESS & FITNESS	2. SPIRITUAL SELF	3. ABUNDANCE/ PROSPERITY
5. CAREER & DREAMS	6. RELATIONSHIPS	7. PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT

8. CREATIVITY & PLAY	4. ROMANCE & INTIMACY
---------------------------------	----------------------------------

PART 2

The second half of this exercise revolves around you creating one solid, achievable goal in each of the 8 areas and then writing and taking one step to move you towards that goal.

You must put a due date for accomplishing your goal. Have someone trustworthy you know hold you accountable for achieving your goals by the set due date.

An example for Core Area #1: your one solid, achievable goal may be to walk for 30 minutes twice a week for the next 2 weeks. It's not overwhelming and it's a good start. The one step to moving towards that goal may be making sure you have a safe route to walk for those 30 minutes if it's outside or getting someone dependable to walk with for the two days a week.

While this may seem a simple exercise, it's quite easy to put off carrying through to the next level. You are solely accountable for your actions and if your goal goes unaccomplished, you cannot cast your gaze anywhere else except towards yourself. People and outside circumstances will interfere only if you let them. So don't let them.

So in the first column, write your solid, achievable goal for each of the core areas. In the second column, write the one step you will take to accomplish your achievable goal.

Remember to achieve anything you only need to do two things:

- 1). Start from where you are.
- 2). Move one step at a time in the direction you wish to go.

Achievable Goal	One Step to Achieve the Achievable Goal
#1. Health, Wellness & Fitness	
#2. Spiritual Self	
#3. Finances, Abundance & Prosperity	
#4. Romance & Intimacy	

#5. Career & Dreams	
#6. Relationships	
#7. Personal Development	
#8. Creativity & Play	

CONCLUSION:

It may seem overwhelming to go through your life this way, but the alternative is walking through your life like a ghost on auto pilot.

When you reach your final days and play your life in your head like a movie will you be happy with how you lived it?

Or will you be like most people full of regret.

So, if you want to continue on this journey of self-discovery and creation then I would encourage you to get the LOVE, FORGIVENESS, CAREER, HAPPINESS Workbook. <https://www.amazon.com/Love-Forgiveness-Career-Happiness-Creating/dp/1500334995>

It's your life why not make it the way you want it to be!

If you not sure how you want your life to be then this Workbook is definitely for you!

The time you spend going through the pages and writing in your journal; you will discover what you've been missing because you've been letting everything and everyone be more important than you!

