

YOUR YEAR TO EMBODY WEALTH, WELLNESS, AND WORTHINESS

BEST HUSTLE LIFE

Volume 046

THE POWER BEHIND
**DANIELLE
MARGGRAF'S**
EMBODIED MILLIONS

WHAT YOUR
UNFINISHED DREAMS
ARE STILL TRYING
TO **TEACH** YOU

Is There
A Ghostly Truth Behind
"A *CHRISTMAS CAROL*"?

MY
MELTDOWN
OVER
SPILLED **ESPRESSO**

Burn The Rulebook:
**REDEFINE WHAT
SUCCESS MEANS**
IN THE NEW YEAR

PLANT-POWERED
& PURPOSE-
DRIVEN

6 Year Anniversary



A close-up portrait of a woman with dark hair and bangs, wearing a thick brown fur hat and a white knit scarf. She is looking directly at the camera with a serious expression. The background is a snowy forest with evergreen trees. The lighting is soft and diffused, creating a cool, wintry atmosphere.

Spring's Promise:

“This December, I’m holding
gratitude for where we’ve
been, and courage for
where we’re going.”

- Jana Short



EDITING

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Cover Image

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Images:

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Editorial

Jana Short

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Jana Short is a renowned global influencer & an award winning mindset coach. She is an NLP, RTT Practitioner, best selling author, public speaker, host of Oh, My Health... There is HOPE! Podcast, and Best Holistic Life magazine editor.

Jana currently works creating online global influencers, teaching her clients to remove blocks holding them back and how to start that love affair with their potential online clients.

She has recently been recognized and featured on the cover of San Francisco Soeleish Magazine 2022, Los Angeles Entrepreneur Magazine September 2021 issue as Los Angeles #1 Mindset Coach two years in a row. Monica Garg's "Influential Women of the World-Global Influencers" 2020, Las Vegas Entrepreneurs Magazine "Top 25 Entrepreneurs for 2020" issue, and the cover of December's Best Holistic Life Magazine.

Jana is getting the message of hope out into the world in a huge way, changing the world one inspiring story at a time.



Catch Jana on:

<https://www.janashort.com/>

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FINE
BY DESIGN



FINE BY DESIGN is where real women from five different decades reveal the secrets to ageless living. Hosted by the powerhouse Editors of Ageless Living Magazine—Jana Short, Brooke Young, AzLynn Berry, Theresa Byrne, and Nathalie Botros—this show is like *The View* for longevity, beauty, mindset, and truth.

One table. Five voices. Infinite wisdom.



Best Holistic Life



WHAT YOUR UNFINISHED DREAMS ARE STILL TRYING TO TEACH YOU

BY JANA SHORT

December is often seen as the month of closing chapters. Of tying things up in velvet ribbons. Of preparing for the "new you" that will magically arrive on January 1st. But what if the most powerful version of you isn't waiting in the next chapter—she's trapped in an unfinished one?

Let's talk about the ghosts.

Not the kind that haunt with regret or rattle chains of shame. I'm talking about the sacred echoes of your former dreams. The ones you buried when life got loud. The ones you paused "just for now" but never returned to. The goals you swore you'd chase when the kids were older, the bank account was fuller, or the fear was smaller.

You know the ones.

The book idea that still whispers lines to you in the shower. The wellness routine you abandoned after one bad week. The business plan that sits, half-loved, in your Google Drive. The language you wanted to learn, the trip you meant to take, the nonprofit you dreamed of starting. The idea you brought up at dinner once, when your eyes lit up—then never spoke of again.

We call them "abandoned goals," but they aren't gone. They're ghosts. And they are still speaking.

THE MYTH OF THE QUITTER

Here's the truth no one tells you: letting go of a goal doesn't make you a failure. Life changes. You change. Sometimes a goal served its purpose just by lighting the path for a little while. But there are other times—and you know the ones I mean—where you didn't quit because it wasn't right. You quit because you got scared. Tired. Distracted. Discouraged.

Maybe you were heartbroken. Maybe someone told you it was unrealistic. Maybe you didn't see anyone else who looked like you doing it, so you thought, "Why me?"

And that goal didn't die. It simply moved into the shadows, waiting for you to come back with wiser eyes and a stronger spine.

What makes this time different? You've changed. You've survived things you didn't think you would. You've gained clarity, resilience, and maybe even the support system that didn't exist back then. That's worth something.

This is your invitation to revisit the ghosts. Not to resurrect every single one, but to listen to what they came to teach you.

THE LANGUAGE OF THE GHOSTS

Abandoned goals speak in riddles. They don't demand; they nudge. Their language is subtle:

- That sting of envy when someone else publishes their book.
- The flash of longing when you hear someone speak on a stage.
- The tug in your chest when you see your old vision board.
- That pang of sadness when you remember who you used to be, before you got so "practical."
- The dreams that still show up in your journal, even when you pretend not to care.

That's not failure. That's feedback.

It's a breadcrumb trail from your soul. And it deserves your attention.

Sometimes, the dreams you didn't finish weren't meant to be finished the way you first imagined. Maybe that coaching program you dropped wasn't supposed to be a business—it was a bridge to the community you secretly craved. Maybe the novel you never finished writing gave you the courage to start speaking your truth. Maybe the dance classes you gave up weren't about performance, but liberation.

Sometimes the detour is the destination. But you'll never know if you don't go back and ask.

And sometimes, those ghosts return not to haunt you, but to hand you the key to your next chapter.





HOW TO REVISIT YOUR GHOSTS (WITHOUT SHAME)

This process is not about judgment. It's about integration. Your past goals hold data, desire, and direction. Even the ones that didn't bloom still planted something inside you.

Here's a ritual I invite you to try this December instead of another vision board ceremony:

1. **Make a list of every major goal you've abandoned or delayed.** Don't filter. Big or small. Write it down. Let it spill. No one else has to see it.
2. **Sit with each one. Ask it: Why did I want you?** Reconnect to the why beneath the goal. Was it freedom? Recognition? Purpose? Love? A desire to feel alive?
3. **Then ask: Why did I stop?** Be radically honest. Was it timing? Self-doubt? Burnout? Was it fear of success? Fear of being seen? Fear of being alone?
4. **Now, listen: What are you here to show me?** Some will whisper, "I was never yours to carry." Others will say, "You're ready now."
5. **Finally, choose.** Don't try to reclaim them all. Choose one. Just one.

And make a new kind of promise to it. Not perfection. Just presence. Want to take it deeper? Write a letter to that abandoned dream. Let it write one back. Let it tell you what it saw while it was waiting. Let it tell you that it forgives you.

Then, do one thing for it. Send one email. Make one call. Reopen the document. Order the materials. Speak it out loud.

You don't have to sprint. But you do have to say yes.

YOU DON'T OWE ANYONE A STRAIGHT PATH

Here's a truth most people won't say out loud: success is rarely a straight line. It's a tangled map of restarts, wrong turns, and reawakenings. The most powerful, purpose-driven people I know have entire cemeteries of former goals.

But here's what they also have:

The courage to go back.

The humility to begin again.

The wisdom to know what still matters.

They don't see those abandoned paths as proof of failure. They see them as sacred chapters in their curriculum of becoming. And they give themselves permission to take what they need from each one and leave the rest.

You are allowed to evolve. You are allowed to change your mind. And you are allowed to return to something with new eyes and a braver heart.

You are also allowed to grieve the ones you've outgrown. To thank them for what they gave you and let them go. That, too, is powerful.

The ghosts are not here to shame you. They're here to invite you into full-circle healing.

The Permission Slip You Didn't Know You Needed

You don't have to start over to start again. You don't need to wait until January to declare a rebirth. You are allowed to pick up an old dream, brush off the dust, and say, "Let's try again, but differently."

You are not behind.

You are not too late.

You are not too tired.

You are here.

And the dream is, too.

So, if you needed a sign? This is it.

Go back. Not to become who you were, but to meet the part of you that never gave up.

This December, let your unfinished business become your soul's blueprint.

Let the ghosts guide you home.

Because sometimes, the most important dreams are the ones that refuse to stay dead. They are waiting to become the truest version of your story.

Don't just set resolutions.

Resolve to remember.

Resolve to reclaim.

Resolve to rise.

Want to share the dream you're resurrecting? Tag us @bestholisticlife and let us celebrate your comeback. Let your story be someone else's permission slip.

UNLOCK YOUR POTENTIAL WITH THE POWER OF 'YET'

STEP INTO YOUR POWER, BREAK BARRIERS, AND CREATE THE LIFE YOU DESERVE



RESILIENCE

CONFIDENCE

GROWTH

SUCCESS



JANA SHORT

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Empower **YOUR HEALTH:** **NUTRITION TIPS TO NOURISH YOUR HORMONES**

BY DR. DEE

Nutrition plays a fundamental role in supporting hormonal balance and overall well-being. The foods we eat provide the building blocks for hormone production, metabolism, and signaling throughout the body. By nourishing our bodies with nutrient-dense foods and adopting a balanced approach to nutrition, we can promote hormonal harmony and enhance our wellness journey. In this article, we'll explore nutrition tips for balance, empowering you to nourish your body and support optimal hormonal health.

UNDERSTANDING THE LINK BETWEEN NUTRITION AND HORMONAL BALANCE

Our hormones play a crucial role in regulating various physiological processes, including metabolism, energy production, mood, and reproductive health. Imbalances in hormone levels can lead to a wide range of health issues, including fatigue, weight gain, mood swings, and reproductive disorders. Nutrition plays a key role in supporting hormonal balance by providing the essential nutrients and compounds needed for hormone synthesis, regulation, and metabolism.

THE IMPACT OF DIET ON HORMONAL HEALTH:

1. **Macronutrients:** Consuming a balanced ratio of macronutrients—carbohydrates, proteins, and fats—is essential for hormone production and metabolism. Ensure you're getting an adequate intake of each macronutrient to support hormonal balance and overall health.
2. **Micronutrients:** Vitamins, minerals, and antioxidants play crucial roles in hormone synthesis, regulation, and function. Include a variety of nutrient-rich foods in your diet to ensure you're meeting your micronutrient needs and supporting hormonal health.
3. **Fiber:** Dietary fiber helps regulate blood sugar levels, improve digestion, and support detoxification processes in the body. Include plenty of fiber-rich foods such as fruits, vegetables, whole grains, legumes, and nuts and seeds in your diet to support hormonal balance.
4. **Omega-3 Fatty Acids:** Omega-3 fatty acids, found in fatty fish, flaxseeds, chia seeds, and walnuts, have anti-inflammatory properties and support brain health, mood stability, and hormonal balance. Include sources of omega-3 fatty acids in your diet regularly to support hormonal health.
5. **Phytoestrogens:** Phytoestrogens are plant compounds that have weak estrogen-like effects in the body and may help balance hormone levels. Include phytoestrogen-rich foods such as soybeans, tofu, tempeh, flaxseeds, and sesame seeds in your diet in moderation.
6. **Probiotics:** Probiotics are beneficial bacteria that support gut health and immune function. Including fermented foods such as yogurt, kefir, sauerkraut, and kimchi in your diet can promote a healthy gut microbiome and support hormonal balance.
7. **Hydration:** Staying hydrated is essential for overall health and hormonal balance. Drink plenty of water throughout the day to support digestion, nutrient absorption, and detoxification processes in the body.

PRACTICAL NUTRITION TIPS FOR BALANCE:

1. **Eat Whole, Unprocessed Foods:** Focus on consuming whole, unprocessed foods that are rich in nutrients and free from artificial additives, preservatives, and added sugars.
2. **Prioritize Plant-Based Foods:** Aim to fill your plate with a variety of colorful fruits, vegetables, whole grains, legumes, nuts, and seeds to ensure a diverse and nutrient-rich diet.

3. **Choose Healthy Fats:** Include sources of healthy fats such as avocados, olive oil, nuts, seeds, and fatty fish in your diet to support hormone production and overall health.
4. **Optimize Meal Timing:** Pay attention to meal timing and spacing to support stable blood sugar levels and prevent spikes and crashes in energy throughout the day.
5. **Listen to Your Body:** Practice intuitive eating by tuning into your body's hunger and fullness cues and honoring your cravings with nourishing foods that support your overall well-being.
6. **Practice Mindful Eating:** Slow down and savor your meals, paying attention to the flavors, textures, and sensations of each bite. Mindful eating can help prevent overeating and promote digestion and nutrient absorption.
7. **Seek Professional Guidance:** If you have specific dietary concerns or health issues, consider seeking guidance from a registered dietitian or nutritionist who can provide personalized recommendations based on your individual needs and goals.

EMPOWERING YOUR NUTRITION JOURNEY FOR HORMONAL HEALTH

Nourishing your body with nutrient-dense foods and adopting a balanced approach to nutrition is essential for promoting hormonal balance and overall wellness. By incorporating practical nutrition tips into your daily routine, you can support optimal hormone production, metabolism, and signaling throughout the body. If you're ready to explore additional resources and support for optimizing your nutrition for hormonal health, consider enrolling in the Balancing Abundance program.

GET STARTED TODAY!

Nutrition plays a fundamental role in supporting hormonal balance and overall well-being. By nourishing your body with nutrient-dense foods, prioritizing a balanced approach to nutrition, and adopting practical tips for optimal health, you can empower yourself to support hormonal harmony and enhance your wellness journey. The Balancing Abundance program offers comprehensive support and guidance for individuals seeking to optimize their nutrition for hormonal health. Visit <http://AskDrDee.com> to learn more and embark on your journey to balanced nutrition today.

Contact Info:

<https://askdrdee.taplink.ws>



MY MELTDOWN OVER SPILLED ESPRESSO

One Girl's Burnout Story

BY DR. CALI ESTES

I've been there. Running on fumes, living off triple-shot espressos (and occasionally a can of C4 for that extra "oomph"), feeling like a hamster on a wheel that just won't stop. It's that never-ending cycle where your to-do list breeds like rabbits, your inbox explodes faster than popcorn in the microwave, and "relaxation" feels like a myth told by people who obviously don't have 247 emails waiting for them.

But the moment that broke me? It wasn't the 14-hour days, the back-to-back client calls, or the late-night emails. Nope. It was spilling an espresso—one perfectly brewed shot of liquid gold—gone. And I lost it. I stood there, staring at that tiny puddle on the floor, and just... sobbed.

Sound familiar? If you're nodding along, welcome to the club—the "I'm so burned out that even my burnout is tired" club. It's not exclusive, and I can tell you firsthand that it's not glamorous. But here's the kicker: it's also fixable. And that's where I come in with The 5-Day Executive Reset—the secret weapon to reclaiming your sanity, energy, and (dare I say?) joy. **THE BURNOUT LOOP:**

Stuck on Repeat Burnout doesn't just knock on the door; it kicks it down, plops on your couch, and eats all your snacks. It starts slowly—a little extra stress, a few missed gym sessions, cutting back on sleep "just for one project." Before you know it, you're binge-watching Netflix at 2 AM, convincing yourself that five hours of sleep is totally fine because "I'll make it up later." (Spoiler alert: You won't.)

I was there once—a walking zombie, juggling clients, running The Addictions Academy, building Sober on Demand, and trying to keep my sanity intact. My mind was running a million miles an hour, but my body? Oh, it was waving a white flag. My caffeine-fueled hustle eventually caught up with me, and I found myself burnt out and mentally fried—and I'm a psychologist who literally teaches people how to avoid this. The irony wasn't lost on me.

SIGNS YOU'RE HEADING FOR A CRASH

Burnout doesn't just tap you on the shoulder. It grabs you by the collar and shakes you until you can't ignore it anymore. If any of these sound familiar, you're probably on the express train to Burnoutville:

- ✓ **Mental Exhaustion:** Your brain feels like a browser with 37 tabs open, all buffering at once. Even deciding what to order for dinner feels like calculus.



- ✓ **Emotional Numbness:** That passion you used to feel for your work? It's hiding under a mountain of stress, unanswered emails, and reheated coffee.
- ✓ **Physical Fatigue:** You wake up feeling like you've pulled an all-nighter... except you didn't. No amount of sleep, caffeine, or power naps seems to fix it.
- ✓ **Increased Irritability:** Your patience is on life support. The smallest things—slow Wi-Fi, someone breathing too loudly—send you into a spiral.
- ✓ **Lack of Focus:** You're working longer hours but accomplishing less. It's like your brain is buffering, and you're waiting for the loading bar to finish.

If you're ticking off most (or all) of these boxes, congratulations (or should I say condolences?). You're officially part of the overachiever burnout brigade.

WHY HIGH PERFORMERS BURN OUT FASTER

Here's the thing—burnout tends to hit high achievers harder. People who are wired to succeed, chase big goals, and operate at 110% all the time are often the last to hit the brakes. We convince ourselves that we're "just fine" while our bodies and minds scream otherwise. The problem? Our brains and bodies aren't built for nonstop hustle.

When you're constantly in "go mode," your body pumps out stress hormones like cortisol as if it's preparing for battle. And while that might help you crush deadlines temporarily, it's like keeping your foot on the gas while the engine is overheating. Eventually, something's going to give—and spoiler alert: It's usually your mental health.

WHY SHORT-TERM FIXES DON'T WORK

A weekend getaway or a spa day might feel great in the moment, but they're



like slapping a Band-Aid on a broken leg. Sure, you feel better temporarily, but as soon as you jump back into your grind, the cycle starts all over again. True burnout recovery requires more than just a quick break—it demands a hard reset.

THE SCIENCE BEHIND BURNOUT AND MENTAL FATIGUE

Burnout isn't just a "mental" issue—it's deeply physiological. Prolonged stress affects the prefrontal cortex (the part of your brain responsible for decision-making and focus), making it harder to think clearly and regulate emotions. It also depletes dopamine, which is why even after checking off a huge project, you feel zero satisfaction.

Your body, meanwhile, is pumping out stress hormones like cortisol, keeping you stuck in survival mode. Left unchecked, this cycle leads to inflammation, weakened immunity, and a whole lot of "why am I so exhausted all the time?" moments.

THE IMPORTANCE OF A HARD RESET

When you're operating in overdrive for too long, your system needs more than a nap and a bubble bath to recover. It needs a hard reset—a way to pause, recalibrate, and rebuild from the ground up. But here's the thing: this isn't about stepping away from your goals. It's about approaching them with renewed energy, clarity, and purpose.

A real reset looks like this:

Mental Unload: Clearing out the mental clutter. I use a method I swear by called the Brain Dump Method, where you get everything swirling in your head onto paper. It's like hitting "Ctrl+Alt+Delete" for your brain.

Dopamine Restoration: Resetting your brain chemistry so that you feel excited and motivated again. Activities that stimulate creativity, joy, and accomplishment (without adding to your to-do list) help restore balance.

Emotional Recharge: Processing suppressed emotions that pile up during periods of stress. Let's be real—when you're burned out, even basic emotions get put on the back burner.

Physical Recalibration: Detoxing from stress, reintroducing movement that energizes (not exhausts), and fueling your body with what it actually needs to thrive.

Boundary Reinvention: Learning to set boundaries that protect your energy, sanity, and focus. Because saying "no" isn't selfish—it's survival.

WHY BOUNDARIES MATTER MORE THAN YOU THINK

Setting boundaries might feel uncomfortable at first, especially if you're used to saying "yes" to everything. But here's the truth: burnout thrives where boundaries don't exist. Without clear limits, your work-life balance blurs, and before you know it, your personal time is hijacked by things that drain you.

Learning to say "no" isn't about rejecting opportunities—it's about protecting your energy for the things that truly matter. You can't pour from an empty cup, and if you're constantly running on empty, everything—from your work to your relationships—suffers.

MOVING FORWARD: WHAT HAPPENS AFTER A RESET?

Imagine waking up and actually feeling excited to tackle your day—not dreading it. Your brain feels clear, your body feels energized, and that creative spark? It's back with a vengeance. You're making better decisions, setting boundaries like a pro, and—get this—actually enjoying your success without feeling like a prisoner to your schedule.

After a proper reset, you'll notice:

- Sharper focus and decision-making.
- Increased creativity and problem-solving abilities.
- A stronger sense of control over your time and energy.
- Greater resilience to stress and unexpected challenges.

FINAL THOUGHTS: LISTEN TO THE SIGNALS

If you're experiencing any of the warning signs of burnout, take it seriously. Ignoring the signals won't make them go away—it will only prolong the inevitable crash. Recognize that taking care of yourself isn't a luxury—it's a necessity if you want to continue operating at your highest potential.

Whether it's through structured resets or intentional self-care, giving yourself the space to recharge is one of the smartest investments you can make. Trust me—I've been there, and I can tell you that life on the other side of burnout is a lot more fun, a lot less stressful, and way more rewarding.

Meet Dr. Cali Estes: Your Guide to Reversing Burnout. If you're ready to get off the burnout rollercoaster, I've got you covered. I'm Dr. Cali Estes, founder of The Addictions Coach and creator of the 5-Day Executive Reset—a proven system that helps high performers like you reclaim their mental clarity, restore balance, and get back to thriving. This intensive reset is designed to target the root causes of burnout, boost dopamine levels, and rewire your brain so you can crush your goals without sacrificing your health. Ready to reset and recharge? Visit TheAddictionCoachOnline.com to learn more and take the first step toward getting your life back on track.





WHEN *Success* FEELS EMPTY:

RECONNECTING WITH YOUR PURPOSE BEFORE YEAR-END

BY MALAYSIA HARRELL

The world has long taught us that success comes from a constant chase, a never-ending hustle, and a deep sense of urgency. We're raised to believe that we must continuously strive, do more, and push ourselves to the limits in order to manifest the life we desire. However, as we step into 2026, it's time to reconsider this approach. What if the key to manifesting all that we truly desire doesn't lie in the hustle? What if true abundance and fulfillment arise from a place of wholeness, balance, and deep inner peace? It's time to shift the narrative and manifest from a space of self-alignment, not from the pressure to perform.

MANIFESTATION FROM WHOLENESS: THE POWER OF INNER ALIGNMENT

Manifesting from wholeness means stepping into a space of acceptance and self-love, where you no longer feel the need to prove your worth through your achievements. This shift requires a deep and profound

understanding that you are enough, exactly as you are. You are not defined by your accomplishments, your career, your social media presence, or the validation of others. Manifesting from wholeness is about listening to your soul, tuning into your inner wisdom, and aligning with your highest truth. It's about feeling whole and complete, even before your external circumstances reflect that inner knowing.

For years, we've been conditioned to believe that we must "do" in order to "be." The hustle mentality makes us feel as though our value is tied to our productivity, to how much we accomplish each day. But when we manifest from a place of inner alignment, we move away from this transactional approach. We begin to understand that our worth is inherent, not contingent upon our external achievements.

In practice, this means that manifestation becomes less about striving for external goals and more about aligning with who we truly are at our

core. When you manifest from wholeness, you are not chasing something outside of yourself. Instead, you are allowing yourself to be a magnet for your desires because you know that what you seek is already within you. When you tap into your authentic self, you attract what is meant for you with grace and ease.

THE FALLACY OF THE HUSTLE:

BREAKING FREE FROM THE PRESSURE

The hustle mentality is not just an external pressure; it's internalized as a belief that in order to be worthy, we must constantly prove ourselves. This idea is rooted in fear—fear of failure, fear of not being good enough, and fear of being left behind. As a result, many of us operate on autopilot, moving from one task to the next, grinding away at our goals with no real understanding of why we're doing it or whether it truly aligns with our authentic self.

When we buy into the hustle, we inadvertently rob ourselves of the space to slow down, reflect, and be present. We become consumed with checking boxes, reaching milestones, and racing against time, never allowing ourselves to truly enjoy the journey or appreciate the beauty of where we are. The truth is, hustle often leads to burnout, emotional exhaustion, and a sense of disconnection from ourselves and others. It's a cycle that keeps us perpetually chasing something that seems just out of reach, creating an illusion of satisfaction that never quite materializes.

The hustle is also a trap that makes us believe that success is a linear path, requiring continuous, unyielding effort. However, this notion disregards the importance of rest, self-care, and rejuvenation. It overlooks the fact that some of the most profound breakthroughs happen during moments of stillness and reflection, not when we're caught in the frenzy of action.

Breaking free from the hustle is about rethinking how we approach our goals and dreams. It's about shifting our focus from external validation and external goals to inner peace and authenticity. It's about setting intentions, not based on pressure or fear, but from a place of trust in the natural flow of life. This year, as you step into 2026, release the idea that you have to work harder than everyone else or push yourself beyond your limits in order to succeed. Instead, embrace the idea that alignment with your true self is the most powerful tool for manifesting your desires.

CREATING SPACE FOR EASE: HOW TO EMBRACE A NEW WAY OF MANIFESTING

To manifest from wholeness, it's crucial to create space for ease, trust, and surrender. This is perhaps the most challenging yet rewarding part of the process. In a culture that prizes speed and efficiency, creating space for ease can feel like a radical act of rebellion. Yet, it is precisely in the act of surrendering the need for control that the magic of manifestation occurs.

Manifesting from ease doesn't mean inaction or passivity; rather, it's about embracing a mindset that allows things to flow to you naturally. It's about releasing attachment to specific outcomes and trusting that the universe, or whatever higher power you believe in, has a greater plan for you. When we are open to receiving, we naturally align with our desires instead of forcing them into existence. Manifestation, in this sense, becomes less of a pursuit and more of a partnership with the universe.

Creating space for ease also involves embracing patience. Too often, we become frustrated when things don't unfold according to our timeline. We forget that there is a rhythm to life that is beyond our understanding. When we are in tune with this rhythm, we learn that everything happens at the perfect time, in the perfect way. This allows us to release the urgency and stress that often accompany manifestation, creating room for peace and ease.

As you move through 2026, consider shifting your energy from “doing” to “being.” Spend less time focusing on your to-do lists and more time connecting with yourself, your values, and your deeper desires. Create daily practices that nourish your mind, body, and spirit, such as meditation, journaling, and self-reflection. These practices help you tap into your innate wisdom and bring you back into alignment with your highest self. When you embody this mindset of ease, you create the space necessary for manifestation to unfold naturally.

Manifestation is not about forcing or controlling; it's about trusting, aligning, and receiving. By manifesting from wholeness, we embrace the fullness of who we are and trust that we deserve all that we desire. This year, make 2026 personal—release the pressure, let go of the hustle, and open your heart to the power of manifesting from a place of peace, wholeness, and alignment.

MANIFESTATION AS AN ONGOING JOURNEY OF BECOMING

Manifesting from wholeness is not a one-time event but an ongoing journey. It's about evolving into the highest version of yourself with each passing day. When we align our goals with our authentic self, we not only manifest external success but also experience an internal transformation that is far more rewarding. The magic of manifestation lies not in what we achieve, but in who we become in the process.

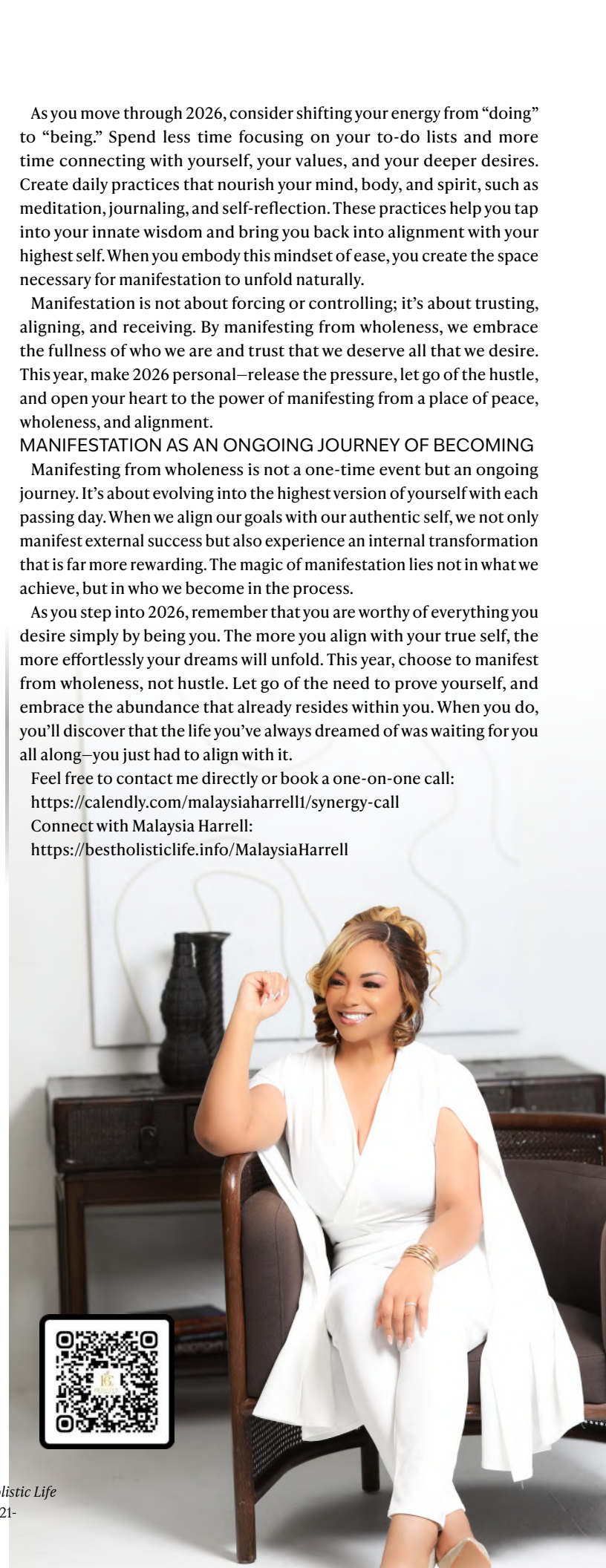
As you step into 2026, remember that you are worthy of everything you desire simply by being you. The more you align with your true self, the more effortlessly your dreams will unfold. This year, choose to manifest from wholeness, not hustle. Let go of the need to prove yourself, and embrace the abundance that already resides within you. When you do, you'll discover that the life you've always dreamed of was waiting for you all along—you just had to align with it.

Feel free to contact me directly or book a one-on-one call:

<https://calendly.com/malaysiaharrell1/synergy-call>

Connect with Malaysia Harrell:

<https://bestholisticlife.info/MalaysiaHarrell>



MASTER YOUR EMOTIONS, TRANSFORM YOUR DECISIONS USING NLP

BY JOHN JAMES SANTANGELO, PHD

Have you ever made a decision you later regretted? Or felt stuck because you couldn't decide at all? Of course, we all have. And it's usually because of one reason: our emotional states!

The truth is our emotions drive EVERY decision we make. When we're anxious, overwhelmed, or unsure, we're far more likely to 'react' impulsively, or worse, not take action at all.

This is where NLP—Neuro-Linguistic Programming—comes in. NLP provides you with practical tools to understand, manage, and shift your emotional states, enabling you to make more confident and accurate decisions, regardless of the circumstances around you.

Our Emotions Drive Our Decisions

We'd like to believe we make choices based on logic. However, neuroscience and psychology tell us a different story: emotion comes first, and then we justify it with logic.

Your emotional state impacts:

- How you interpret situations
- What options you notice (or don't)
- Whether you take action or avoid it

This is why learning to master your emotions is so powerful. When you learn to control how you feel, you control how you respond—thus better shape your outcomes!

HOW NLP HELPS YOU TAKE CONTROL

NLP is based on the simple idea that we are in control of our emotional states—therefore, your results! Your thoughts, language, and physical body set up your emotional states, and then from here we make decisions. So, by changing any of these, you can shift how you feel, which can change the meaning, changing your results!

Here are five NLP strategies to help you take charge of your emotions so you can make better, more powerful decisions:

1. SHIFT YOUR STATE, CHANGE YOUR OUTCOME:

You can't make great decisions when you're in a negative state—like feeling stressed, angry, or fearful. NLP teaches us you can change your state—how you feel in the moment—using movement, breath, and mindful focus.

Try this:

Right now—stand up, pull your shoulders back, chin up, take a long, slow, deep breath, and recall a time when you felt totally powerful and in control. As you do this now, your physiology will begin to change—and so will the emotional state you are in. This technique is called state management, and it's the foundation of any kind of high performance.

2. ANCHOR YOUR EMPOWERING EMOTIONS:

Anchoring is an NLP technique that helps you 'access' a powerful emotion on command—like confidence, calm, or motivation.

Here's how:

- Think of a time, let's say, when you felt totally motivated.
- As the feeling builds, press your thumb and middle finger together (or create another very unique touch or gesture).
- Repeat this with 2–3 other strong 'motivation' memories. Clear your mind between each memory.
- Then test it: fire your anchor—press your thumb and middle finger together and notice how your body responds.

You've just trained your nervous system to shift your emotional state on demand!

3. REFRAME THE MEANING

NLP teaches that it's never what happens to us that matters—it's the meaning we assign to it. For example, failing at something—you could place a meaning of "I'm not good enough," or... it could mean, "I'm learning what doesn't work." The meaning creates the emotion, and when we change the meaning, we change the way we feel—thus the way we act or DECIDE TO ACT!

You could ask yourself this:

- What else could this mean?
- How can I learn from this?

This is called reframing, and it's one of the most powerful tools for emotional control.

4. UPGRADE YOUR INNER DIALOGUE

Your internal language is WHAT you believe and shapes your emotions more than you realize consciously. Saying "I'm overwhelmed," "I'm not good enough," or "I don't know what I'm doing" creates an emotional reality your UNCONSCIOUS MIND buys into.

NLP helps you notice unresourceful language patterns—like generalizations, assumptions, or catastrophizing—and replaces them with empowering alternatives.

Examples:

- "I always screw up." Reframed -> "I've had setbacks, but I'm learning."
- "This is impossible." Reframe -> "This is a challenge, and I'm capable of figuring it out."

When you speak to yourself with clarity and strength, your decisions reflect that.

5. DECIDE FROM THE FUTURE, NOT YOUR PAST

Most people make decisions from the emotional pain they're in now or the fear from their past. NLP helps you step into the future—into the better, more empowering version of yourself that already has the outcome you want—and then decide from that place.

Try this:

Imagine it's a week, one month, or 12 months from now. You've already achieved your goal. Ask yourself, "What choices did you make to get here? What did I stop tolerating? What did I commit to that got me here? This process brings us clarity and courage—because now, you're making decisions from alignment, not emotion. Doesn't this make sense?

These tools aren't just for therapists or coaches. They work for:

- Entrepreneurs making high-stakes choices
- Parents navigating emotional conversations
- Professionals wanting to perform under pressure
- Athletes wanting to step into a high-performance state
- Anyone ready to take back control of their mind and emotions

NLP is the manual for your mind—so you can stop reacting and start responding with purpose.

YOUR PATH FORWARD

If any of this powerful information resonates with you, you're not just looking to make better decisions—you're ready for a real transformation, yes? That's exactly what my new book—*Control Your Emotions, Master Your Life!*—offers you... now LIVE on Amazon!

After buying it, you will learn:

- How to shift emotional states instantly
- How to change negative beliefs and habits that hold you back
- How to lead and communicate with greater personal power
- How to create a transformation change that actually lasts

Whether you want to grow your business, strengthen your relationships, build financial success, or simply stop second-guessing yourself, NLP gives you the edge! You can't control what happens to you—but you can always control how you respond to it! Get your copy today!

Connect with John James:

<https://amazon.com/dp/B0F2GVM9X2>





Nathalie
Botros
#BonVivant girl

QBurn

THE RULEBOOK: REDEFINE WHAT SUCCESS MEANS IN THE NEW YEAR

BY NATHALIE BOTROS

With the year ending, the pressure to set goals that look impressive to other people starts. Everyone will ask about your resolutions, expecting you to recite the same tired list: lose weight, find the love of your life, make more money, get promoted. What if this entire approach is backwards?

What if the reason most people abandon their goals by February is not lack of willpower but because they are chasing someone else's definition of success? You have been following a rulebook written by people who do not know your values, your circumstances, or your dreams. It is time to burn that rulebook and write your own.

SUCCESS HAS NO UNIVERSAL FORMULA

Society sells you a one-size-fits-all version of success: climb the corporate ladder, accumulate wealth, buy bigger houses, create the perfect family... You know what I am talking about. The problem is, this formula promises happiness but delivers exhaustion.

Don't get me wrong, these goals are not wrong, but they might be completely wrong for you. When you chase external validation instead of internal fulfillment, you end up achieving things that do not actually improve your life.

Consider the executive who gets the corner office but loses their health. The entrepreneur who builds a million-dollar business but destroys their relationships. They followed the rulebook perfectly and ended up miserable. The truth is, success looks different for everyone, and that is exactly how it should be. For some people, success means building an empire and changing industries. For others, it means mastering a craft or creating something beautiful. Some find success in deep relationships, others in financial freedom, and many in combinations that would confuse the outside world.

WHY YOU FEEL STUCK

Your brain is wired to keep you safe. When you consider goals that deviate from social norms, your brain triggers anxiety as a warning signal. This mechanism keeps you trapped pursuing goals that feel safe but leave you sometimes unfulfilled. Your brain cannot distinguish between physical danger and social disapproval, so it treats both as threats to avoid.

Understanding this helps you recognize that anxiety about unconventional goals or stepping out of your comfort zone is not intuition telling you to stop. It is just your brain doing its job. You can acknowledge the anxiety and pursue your goals anyway.

Another issue that makes you feel stuck is building your identity around achievements rather than values. And most of us fall into that trap. You become "the successful lawyer" or "the devoted parent," and these labels start dictating your choices. The issue is, when your identity depends on external achievements, you lose the flexibility to redefine success.

This creates what psychologists call "identity foreclosure," where you commit to a path early and stop exploring other possibilities. You might continue pursuing law because you are "the lawyer in the family," even if you hate it.

Breaking free requires separating your worth from your achievements.

Ask yourself: if you stripped away all your titles and accomplishments, what would still matter to you? Those underlying values should drive your definition of success.

IDENTIFY YOUR AUTHENTIC GOALS AND CREATE YOUR PERSONAL SUCCESS FRAMEWORK.

Authentic goals come from internal motivation rather than external pressure. Research shows this leads to greater satisfaction and sustained effort. When goals align with your genuine interests, you experience less resistance and more energy.

These goals usually feel energizing when you think about them, and you naturally want to learn more about them. Pay attention to what you do when no one is watching. What topics do you research in your free time? What activities make you lose track of time? What problems do you naturally notice and want to solve? These patterns reveal your genuine interests.

Once you identify your current goals, audit them. Ask yourself, "Am I pursuing this because I genuinely want it, or because I think I should want it?" Notice the difference in your body's response. Genuine goals create excitement, while "should" goals create tension.

Identify your core values and write your personal definition of success in specific terms. Instead of "be happy," write "feel energized by my work." Instead of "have good relationships," write "spend quality time with people who accept the real me."

IMPLEMENTING YOUR SUCCESS

Your subconscious mind will resist changes that threaten your current identity, so change the script. For example, if your goal is financial independence but you identify as "bad with money," start calling yourself "someone learning to manage money well."

Create implementation intentions by deciding in advance how you will handle obstacles and track your progress. If your goal is creative fulfillment, record every creative act you undertake. This evidence helps your brain accept the new version of yourself.

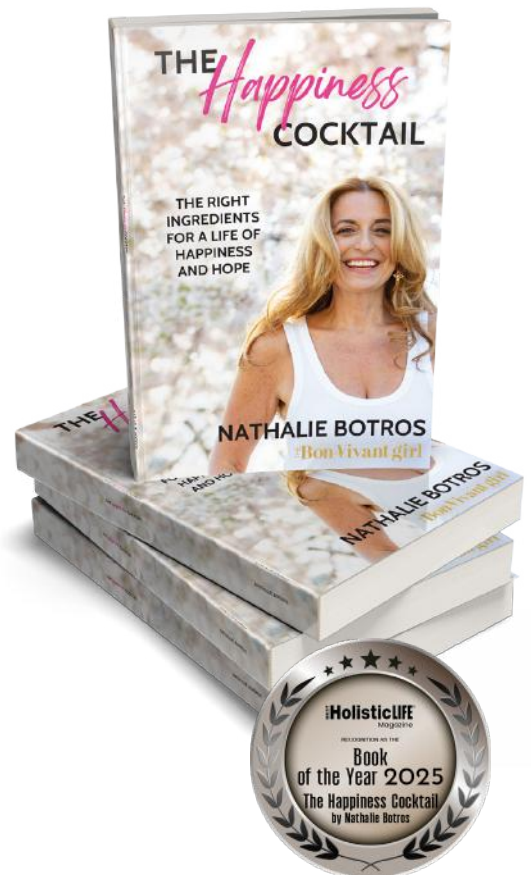
Once you overcome the self-sabotage, be aware of your need for approval. You cannot and should not please everyone. Practice: make decisions without consulting everyone you usually ask. This is your life, your goals, and your success.

We are in December, and it is time to design goals that energize you, align with your values, and fit your unique circumstances.

Need help clarifying your authentic definition of success? Let's talk. Scan the QR code below to receive a complimentary 30-minute session, and we can explore what fulfillment looks like for your specific situation. Remember! The goals that scare and excite you simultaneously are usually pointing toward your authentic path.

Connect with Nathalie Botros:

<https://bestholisticlife.info/NathalieBotros>



Is There A Ghostly Truth Behind “A CHRISTMAS CAROL”?

BY MARK ANTHONY, JD PSYCHIC EXPLORER

During December, it's hard to ignore the holidays. Do you delight in family and friend reunions, gift giving, charitable donations, cheerful music, tasty treats, colorful lights, and decorations—or are you a Scrooge? We all know the mean-spirited holiday hater Ebenezer Scrooge from Charles Dickens' “A Christmas Carol.”

After the scriptural account of the birth of Jesus, “A Christmas Carol” is arguably the most famous holiday story. First published in December 1843, “A Christmas Carol” sold 6,000 copies within a week! Even today those sales would catapult a book onto the New York Times Bestseller List. As a Christmas tradition every generation since has had its version of it from stage to screen. There have been over 100 film and TV versions. Critics hail the 1951 “Scrooge” as the film most faithful to the Dickens classic. Personally I prefer the 1992 version starring the Muppets.

“A Christmas Carol,” set in Victorian London, is about miserly and miserable Ebenezer Scrooge, who loves only money, despises poor people, and loathes everything Christmas. He encounters the spirit of his deceased business partner Jacob Marley, who warns him to change his ways. Next, Scrooge is visited by the Ghosts of Christmas Past, Present, and Future, which causes him to transform overnight from naughty to nice.

We all know the story—or do we?

Beyond the holiday theme and good triumphs over evil moral, “A Christmas Carol” may be based on a mysterious ancient phenomenon. For thousands of years there have been documented accounts of people who died and lived to tell the tale. These “resurrections” baffled physicians and religious leaders alike. We now know this phenomenon as a Near-Death Experience (NDE), which occurs when someone dies and that person's soul/consciousness separates from the body, remains intact, but then the person returns to life.

Most NDE accounts describe a sensation of leaving the body, traveling through a tunnel into a brilliant light and encountering deceased loved ones and other spiritual beings. A major component of an NDE is the life review, which is a vivid recall of one's entire life and the impact that person had on others.

While the vast majority of NDEs are pleasant, uplifting, and euphoric, some people experience a “Distressing Near-Death Experience” (DNDE), more commonly known as the “Hellish NDE.” While these are the least common type of NDEs, they're extremely profound. My colleagues and fellow NDE researchers Dr. Bruce Greyson, Dr. Ken Ring, and Nancy Evans Bush agree with me that a

Hellish NDE is a cosmic wake-up call to change course in life, make amends, and become a better person.

Is “A Christmas Carol” based on the Hellish NDE? Even though the term NDE didn't yet exist, these mysterious resurrections were well known and studied in Victorian paranormal circles. This was also the “age of spiritualism,” which popularized mediumship—the ability of people to communicate with spirits. Dickens studied psychic phenomena and the occult. Although he approached supernatural phenomena with skepticism, Dickens was a member of London's “Ghost Club” and even participated in paranormal investigations.

The case for whether “A Christmas Carol” is based on the Hellish NDE strengthens when elements of NDEs are compared to the sequence of events in “A Christmas Carol.”

THE NEAR-DEATH EXPERIENCER: Ebenezer Scrooge is a miserly, self-centered money lender and debt collector who co-founded a financial firm with his late business partner, the equally selfish Jacob Marley. Since Marley's death Scrooge has become a bitter old man. His sole employee is warm-hearted Bob Cratchit, who symbolizes Victorian London's working-class poor. Cratchit is happily married with six children, the youngest of whom is the physically disabled yet ever cheerful Tiny Tim.

When Cratchit asks for Christmas Day off, Scrooge replies, “Bah Humbug!” Begrudgingly Scrooge agrees but complains Christmas is an excuse for paying a day's wages for no work.

Next, two gentlemen ask Scrooge for a charitable donation to help poor people. Refusing, Scrooge sneers, “Are there no prisons?



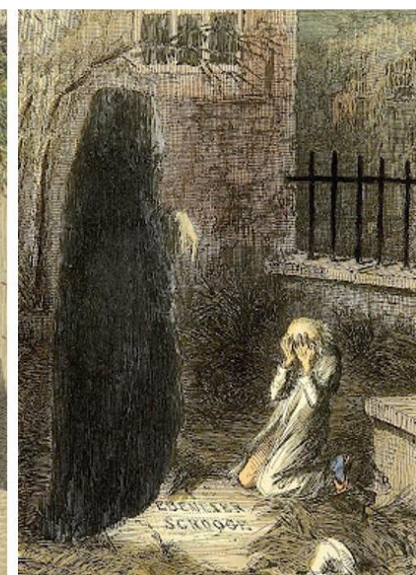


Are there no workhouses?" One of the gentlemen explains many poor people would rather die than go to such places. Scrooge callously replies, "If they would rather die, they had better do it and decrease the surplus population."

NDE TRIGGER AND SPIRITUAL ENCOUNTERS: Dying or a severe life-threatening condition triggers an NDE which can lead to encountering spirits of deceased loved ones and other spiritual beings. Due to unsanitary conditions, food poisoning and cholera were widespread in Victorian London. Scrooge spends Christmas Eve alone in his large, gloomy house, which may be analogized as the threshold between life and death, where Scrooge encounters the spirit of his business partner, Jacob Marley.

Shackled in chains of cashboxes and ledgers as punishment for a lifetime of greed Ghostly Marley warns Scrooge he can avoid this hellish fate by heeding the three spirits who will soon visit. There's evidence for food poisoning in





Scrooge's cynical response to Marley's spirit, "You may be an undigested bit of beef... There's more gravy than grave about you, whatever you are!"

THE LIFE REVIEW: The Ghost of Christmas Past, who emits light from its head and shifts in appearance from child to old man, transports Scrooge back in time to a Christmas dance when he was young and with his girlfriend Belle. Scrooge agonizes, reliving the heartbreak of Belle leaving him because he loved money more than her. The spirit's parting words, "I told you these were shadows of the things that have been; they are what they are, do not blame me."

VERIDICAL PERCEPTION: During NDEs the soul is separated from the body and able to accurately perceive events in different locations which are occurring in real time. The Santa-like Ghost of Christmas Present takes Scrooge to observe Bob Cratchit and his loving family enjoying a simple Christmas dinner. He's moved by the fragile Tiny Tim. Next Scrooge is whisked to a joyful Christmas celebration at the home of the nephew he's rejected. The spirit then reveals two homeless children hiding under the spirit's robes. When Scrooge expresses concern for them, the spirit haunts Scrooge with his own words, "Are there no prisons? Are there no workhouses?"

PERCEPTION OF FUTURE EVENTS: The Ghost of Christmas Future, reminiscent of the Grim Reaper, reveals to Scrooge how his possessions will be stolen by unpaid servants who hate him. Scrooge is devastated seeing the Cratchits mourn Tiny Tim, who died because his family couldn't afford better living conditions and medical care. Scrooge is haunted by his callous words about how the poor should die and "decrease the surplus population."

Finally, Scrooge comes to a graveyard. A desolate tombstone reads: EBENEZER SCROOGE.

TIMELESSNESS: NDEs include a sense of timelessness, which contradicts our perception of time. Scrooge returns believing he's been gone three days but discovers it's Christmas morning—everything he experienced occurred in just one night.

TRANSFORMATIVE: NDEs, particularly Hellish NDEs are life-changing. Scrooge embraces the Christmas spirit, becomes selfless, generous, and compassionate, makes amends with his nephew, and hikes Bob Cratchit's salary, thereby saving Tiny Tim's life.

The spiritually transformative effects of an NDE can take years to fully understand. Two centuries later "A Christmas Carol" continues to entertain, mystify, and inspire us. If Dickens didn't base "A Christmas Carol" on Near-Death Experiences, it certainly is one heck of a synchronicity.

The best gift is one which keeps on giving. On behalf of my fellow authors, special thanks to our Editor-in-Chief Jana Short for giving us a very special gift—the honor of writing for Best Holistic Life Magazine. Our greatest gift is the readers—thank you for your love and support.

And in the words of Tiny Tim, "God Bless us, everyone!"

Connect with Mark Anthony:

<https://bestholisticlife.info/MarkAnthony-Website>



Elevate
HOLISTICS



PLANT-POWERED & PURPOSE-DRIVEN

BY ASPEN NOONAN

Breaking timelines, beating burnout, and building a cannabis company on purpose and grit.

I didn't plan on becoming a CEO at 26, or a mom at the same time—but life, purpose, and pressure rarely stick to a timeline. And maybe that's the lesson.

While we often discuss the importance of breaking glass ceilings, we must also consider the invisible timelines that society imposes on women

regarding when we are "expected" to have our lives in order, advance in our careers, start families, or achieve financial success. I've lived a life that broke all of those norms—and I'm still building something bold, not just for myself, but for the people I lead and the patients we serve.

This is my story as a cannabis CEO, a mother, and a woman committed to helping others set goals they actually care about—and achieve them on their terms.

FROM PATIENT CALLS TO THE CORNER OFFICE: A REAL START-UP STORY

When I joined Elevate Holistics, we were a scrappy startup in just one state. I was the first employee. My job? Answer the phones.

No blueprint. No big team. Just me, a passion for helping people, and a belief that access to plant medicine should be easier, safer, and stigma-free.

Fast-forward to today, and we're in 18 states with over 50 people on the team. We help thousands of patients connect with doctors for medical marijuana cards through a completely virtual, judgment-free experience. And we do it with empathy, speed, and heart.

But scaling the company wasn't easy. In fact, I never set out to be a CEO—I became one out of necessity and passion. I didn't have an MBA or a background in finance. My roots were in operations. I had to learn marketing, leadership, forecasting, and hiring on the fly, often in industries or departments I'd never touched before. It's been humbling—but also wildly empowering.

CANNABIS IS CHAOTIC— AND THAT'S WHERE THE MAGIC IS

The cannabis industry is one of the most unpredictable, saturated markets out there. But anything with massive potential usually is.

State laws change on a dime. Platforms shut us down without warning. Competitors pop up overnight. It's loud, messy, and full of distractions. The key? No shiny object syndrome. Find your focus, anchor your mission, and build with blinders on.

I learned to stay centered in the chaos by asking: What do our patients need? What does my team need? And then moving like hell to meet those needs with clarity, compassion, and drive.

THE "FUN CEO" WHO DOESN'T WORK FRIDAYS

If there's one title I love as much as CEO, it's "Fun CEO."

I believe in creating the kind of company I'd actually want to work for. That's why I implemented a four-day workweek. We don't work Fridays. Period.

It's not a gimmick. It's a belief: When you give people the space to breathe, they show up better. Our team gets more done, feels more fulfilled, and actually has a life outside of work. That balance has been a game-changer—not just for productivity, but for culture.

MOTHERHOOD MADE ME A BETTER LEADER

Becoming a mom didn't slow me down. It sharpened my focus.

Motherhood taught me how to prioritize, delegate, and show grace. It helped me redefine "success" not as being busy 24/7, but as being intentional with my time and energy. It also helped me lead with more softness and strength at the same time.

I want my daughter to grow up knowing she doesn't have to pick between ambition and presence. She can do both—and so can we.

LEADING TEAMS YOU DIDN'T COME FROM

One of the hardest (and most unexpected) parts of leadership? Running departments you've never worked in.

When I stepped into the CEO role, I had to guide marketing, finance, product, and sales—despite never formally working in those spaces. Impostor syndrome hit hard. But I learned to lead by asking great questions, hiring people smarter than me, and trusting my gut.



Leadership isn't about having all the answers. It's about creating a space where the right people can bring the answers—and then helping them execute without fear.

ADVICE FOR WOMEN BREAKING THEIR OWN TIMELINES

If you're waiting for the "right" time to start a business, change careers, or say yes to something big—don't.

The right time is a myth.

We live in a world that tells women to wait until they're more experienced, more polished, and more ready. But the truth is, you become ready by doing. Take the leap, build the skills, and trust yourself enough to try.

IT'S NOT ABOUT PERFECTION. IT'S ABOUT PURPOSE.

What I Know for Sure:

- You don't have to choose between building a business and building a family.
- You don't need to have it all figured out to start.
- You can be soft and strong.
- You can lead with heart and still drive results.
- The people who win are the ones who stay focused, stay kind, and keep showing up.

FINAL THOUGHTS

I'm not a regular CEO—I'm a real one. The kind that knows what it's like to take support calls at 8 PM, lead a meeting with a baby on her hip, and make high-stakes decisions without a playbook.

But I'm also the kind who believes in building companies where people thrive, not just survive, where growth is measured in impact and freedom, not just spreadsheets.

And if my story inspires one woman to ditch her timeline, trust her gut, and go after what she wants—then that's what success really looks like to me.

Connect with Aspen: <https://elevate-holistics.com/>



Guts & Grace

LEADING WITH GUTS & GRACE:

*GETTING BEYOND THE
B*%CH AND THE DOORMAT*

BY LEEANN MALLORIE

The biggest “problem” with our most powerful feminine leadership qualities is that they are often both invisible and highly usable.

As a result of hundreds of years of patriarchy—the unbalanced and unjust prioritization of men and masculine forms of thought, action, and leadership that have created an unlevel playing field in the workplace and society for women to contribute and receive resources, opportunities, access, and support.

Most women have embodied one of a few key strategies to cope:

- We surrender our boundaries, our energy, and our truths to the establishment and let ourselves be used.
- We override our instincts and take on “their” strategies, with strength and vigor, to get ahead (doing it as well as any man, but backward, in heels).
- Or we push back, fight against, and refuse to play the game—getting tight-lipped and tight-bodied to protect our own energies and get our due on the fringe, where we can.

In other words, we become the bi*%ch... or one of the boys... or the doormat.

On the surface, the problem here is obvious. We have to work harder (and in some cases give up our native ways of being and doing) in order to get the same level of access as our male counterparts. Or else, we seem to end up getting steamrolled, sidelined, or pigeonholed at work. We know this.

But there’s a deeper layer that can be even more insidious... especially for women who have mastered the game and are already successful in the current (imbalanced) paradigm.

From a purely spiritual, non-gendered perspective (to borrow the words of Adam Grant): givers gain. Generosity, gratitude, and selfless contribution are the name of the game when it comes to transcending the ego. Saints do it. Monks do it. Well-known philanthropists do it...

And, as the texts (from religion to new-age thought) seem to agree... what we give comes back tenfold. HOWEVER...

The role of systemic oppression is pretty much missing in these stories. So we don’t get the full picture of what can happen when we allow ourselves to be ‘taken’ too much or too far.

On the flip-side, if we simply rail against the establishment, set strict boundaries, take care of our own, and refuse to surrender to the magic of giving...

we fail to activate to our fullest potential as leaders (and humans) and fail to set the spiritual momentum of the universe in motion.

To be an activist? Or a devotee?

To set clear boundaries—or to let ourselves be used?

What's a girl to do?

This is one of the most common topics women leaders grapple with inside of my Guts & Grace community of leaders. It's one of the biggest reasons why I OFTEN answer my client's questions with "it depends."

And it's what makes cracking the code of truly embodied feminine leadership in a business context SUCH a nuanced, soul-refining, and profound game for those who choose to play it.

Getting beyond the b*%ch and the doormat paradigm requires you to.

- know yourself...
- love yourself...
- and trust yourself...

...as a woman. And this is what leading with Guts & Grace is all about.

In order to lead like a woman—artfully embodying the frequencies of the feminine in a business leadership context takes practice, commitment, and dedication. And it's deeply worth it. Because when you declare your commitment to this type of growth, you will be taken on an incredible journey to learn the workings of the new paradigm—from the inside out—for yourself.

Here's why it takes a master:

The nature of listening, collaborating, leading from behind, facilitating, following the flow, trusting spirit to guide you... leading from the feminine... IS about allowing—surrendering.

It makes you 'usable' in the best of ways and in the worst. So, your ability to choose sovereignty, to set boundaries, to track the parody of an energetic exchange—IN PARALLEL to learning this skill—makes it possible to surrender in a good way.

There's no quitting your old habits cold turkey. You MUST learn to navigate in the gray—neither shutting down the urge nor losing control. You MUST do both at once.

This is a true path of mastery.

To the extent that you are already walking this path of growth and healing, I commend you. Many of us (especially those who are successful in our leadership thus far) are already on the path. And most of us have room to improve.

As a next step, consider these questions:

- What are your current coping strategies to contend with the patriarchy at work or in life?
- What are their costs or consequences?
- And where/how do you struggle to calibrate your actions or responses at this stage?

Then, take some time each day to observe yourself in the moment. Notice the sensations that arise in your body. Notice what actions they compel you to take or not take. How and when do you tighten, resist, get stingy, push, and hold back? How and when do you dissolve, leak, lose boundaries, get too porous, and allow too much?

Along the way, take some notes for yourself about your ability—and willingness—to learn and live in the gray.

What gifts or lessons are here for you right now?

Practice with us! Download the Guts & Grace App or contact me to book a coaching discovery call. <https://linktr.ee/leeannmallorie>



A black and white portrait of a woman with shoulder-length, wavy hair, smiling. She is wearing a light-colored blazer over a dark top. Her hands are clasped in front of her, and she is wearing a ring on her left hand.

Carroll Golden

FROM *Paychecks* TO *Paying:* SMART MID-YEAR TAX PLANNING

BY CARROLL GOLDEN

The updates outlined here are just a snapshot of the many tax changes that could impact our return this year and influence your financial picture for years to come. While we've focused on some of the more noteworthy provisions, numerous other adjustments remain beyond the scope of this article. Because tax laws evolve, it's wise to stay informed and seek guidance from a qualified tax professional to ensure you're making the most of the rules as they apply to your situation.

Before we dive in, let's get familiar with a few key tax terms. Knowing which tax bracket your income places you in is essential for smart financial planning and ensuring compliance with both new and existing tax laws. Your tax bracket determines the rate at which your last dollar of income is taxed and can impact deductions, credits, and overall strategy. The current Individual Marginal Income Tax rate brackets are 10%, 12%, 22%, 24%, 32%, 35%, and 37%.

In the world of tax deductions, there are two main categories you need to know: above-the-line deductions and below-the-line deductions.

When filing your return, you or your tax professional will choose to claim either the standard deduction or itemized deductions—but never both.

- Above-the-line deductions are taken before calculating your adjusted gross income (AGI). By reducing your AGI, they can lower the amount of income that's subject to tax. These deductions are available whether you take the standard deduction or decide to itemize.
- Below-the-line deductions—often called itemized deductions—are subtracted after you've calculated your AGI. They directly reduce your taxable income. Taxpayers typically itemize only if the total of their itemized deductions is greater than the standard deduction.

It's also worth noting that some of the tax changes discussed here are temporary and set to expire after a certain date, while others are permanent—at least until Congress enacts new legislation that changes them!

LET'S TALK ABOUT 2025 TAX CHANGES.

The upcoming tax year brings several temporary deductions aimed at putting more money back in taxpayers' pockets. These new provisions cover everything from tip income to overtime pay, senior benefits, and even car loan interest. While each offers meaningful savings for qualifying taxpayers, all are subject to income limits and are set to expire at the end of 2028 unless extended by future legislation. Here's a closer look at what's changing.

No Tax on Tips

- Overview: The \$25,000 above-the-line deduction for qualified tips is subject to income limits, and the deduction decreases for taxpayers with modified adjusted gross income more than \$150,000 (\$300,000 for joint filers).
- Expires on December 31, 2028

No Tax on Overtime

- The \$12,500 (\$25,000 for jointly filing) above-the-line deduction for overtime pay.

It is subject to income limits, and the deduction decreases for taxpayers with modified adjusted gross income of more than \$150,000 (\$300,000 for jointly filing).

- Expires on December 31, 2028

Enhanced Senior Deduction

- Overview: There is an additional \$6,000 deduction for seniors over age 65, but it is subject to income limits, and the deduction decreases for taxpayers with modified adjusted gross income more than \$75,000 (\$150,000 for jointly filing).
- Expires on December 31, 2028.
- No Tax on Car Loan Interest
- Overview: Up to \$10,000 above-the-line deduction for interest paid on qualifying auto loans is subject to income limits, and the deduction decreases for taxpayers with modified adjusted gross income more than \$100,000 (\$200,000 for jointly filing). It is an above-the-line deduction that reduces adjusted gross income, so claiming the deduction is not dependent on whether the taxpayer files an itemized return or claims the standard deduction. The deduction is only for loans originating after December 31, 2024, for vehicles that meet the requirements. The Department of the Treasury and the IRS will issue guidance on which vehicles qualify.
- Expires on December 31, 2028

Thinking about how to give your child or grandchild a strong financial start? There's promising news on the horizon. From recent enhancements to 529 education savings plans to the upcoming debut of Trump Accounts in 2026, new options are emerging—each with unique advantages and a few important differences you'll want to understand before making a move.

529 Plan Savings Account Expansion

- Overview: Increases the K-12 qualified expenses limit from \$10,000 to \$20,000 per child. Significantly, it allows for additional non-tuition qualified expenses for K-12 and additional post-secondary school credentialing program costs. Take note that homeschooling costs are not explicitly included as qualified 529 Plan expenses. Currently, K-12 expenses are specified for "elementary or secondary, public, private, or religious school."

IRS guidance provides that an eligible educational institution for 529 Plans "is generally any college, university, vocational school, or other postsecondary educational institution eligible to participate in a student aid program administered by the U.S. Department of Education."

See IRS Guidance 529 Plans: Questions and Answers

- Under the current changes, 529 Plans can be used for post-secondary credentialing programs, such as programs and tuition for certificate programs, trade schools, and specific other credentialing programs. The 529 education savings plan expansion took effect for distributions made on or after July 4, 2025, the date the new law was enacted.

It's important to note that these changes to 529 Plans relate to federal tax changes. 529

Plans may have different rules within states.

- Expiration: None; currently it's permanent Trump Accounts.
- Overview: While 529 plans remain focused on education-related savings and withdrawals, by contrast, Trump Accounts are expected to operate more like traditional Individual Retirement Accounts (IRAs) and are not tied to education expenses. Under the new law, once the child turns 18, Trump Accounts will be treated the same as traditional IRAs, meaning withdrawals will be taxed accordingly. It wouldn't make much sense, however, to have them subject to a 10% penalty if taken before age 59½. Many operational details remain unclear, and we will need to wait for additional guidance from the Treasury Department and the IRS on how these accounts will be opened and administered.

It is anticipated that employers will be able to deduct contributions to Trump Accounts as a business expense, providing an added benefit to employees—particularly those with children or planning to start a family. However, the mechanics of making contributions, whether through brokerages or via a government-managed system, have yet to be determined, and we will have to wait for additional guidance from Treasury and IRS.

Are you a business owner wondering which of the many new tax changes could work in your favor? This one just might.

Section 199A – Qualified Business Income Deduction

- Overview: Also known as the qualified business income (QBI) deduction, the OBBBA makes targeted adjustments.

Changes include:

Higher phase-in thresholds: The income phase-in range for the deduction has been widened. Previously, the thresholds were \$50,000 above the income limit for single filers and \$100,000 for joint filers. These have now been increased to \$75,000 and \$150,000, respectively, with adjustments for inflation beginning in 2027.

New minimum deduction: Taxpayers with at least \$1,000 in aggregated QBI from active qualified trades or businesses in which they materially participate will now receive a minimum deduction of \$400. This amount will also be indexed for inflation starting in 2027.

The deduction rate remains at 20% and continues to apply only to non-corporate taxpayers with pass-through business income. The calculation remains the lesser of 20% of QBI (plus certain other qualifying income) or 20% of taxable income (minus net capital gains).

- Permanent: This removes the sunset clause that would have ended the QBI deduction after 2025, but also increases access through higher phase-in thresholds and the introduction of a guaranteed minimum deduction for eligible active businesses.

The tax provisions covered here represent only a portion of the changes that may impact your tax strategy. While we've highlighted some significant updates, there are many more details and nuances beyond the scope of this article. As always, consult with a qualified tax professional to understand how these rules apply to your specific situation—and keep in mind that tax laws can and do change.

Connect with Carroll: <https://www.linkedin.com/in/carrollgolden/>



RAISING THE BAR: HOW ABOVE BOARD LIQUEURS IS CHANGING COCKTAIL CULTURE FOR HEALTH-CONSCIOUS DRINKERS

BY NICOLE SLONE





Above Board Liqueurs is redefining cocktail culture for health-conscious drinkers. Founded in Southern California by Nicole and Brent Slone, the brand blends classic cocktail tradition with plant-based, sugar-free innovation, utilizing monk fruit and Allulose, both of which have zero glycemic impact. The lineup includes Orange, Coffee, and Cream (the only dairy variety), all crafted with a gluten-free neutral grain spirit and free from cane sugar, corn syrup, preservatives, and artificial sweeteners. Lower ABV levels make them ideal for mindful drinkers and the sober-curious, while bold flavors satisfy without compromise. From boutique restaurants to the Hyatt Regency, which calls Above Board a leader in the “Better-for-You” beverage movement, the brand is expanding into 17 Total Wine & More locations, 10 Ralphs, and popular California venues including Brigantine, Humphreys, and Kona Kai.

Check out Above Board: <https://drinkaboveboard.com>



Best Holistic Life



YOUR EYES AFTER 40: HOLISTIC STRATEGIES FOR HEALTHY VISION

BY DR. RANI BANIK, MD

THREE ESSENTIAL DAILY HABITS THAT WILL SUPPORT YOUR EYES NATURALLY FROM THE INSIDE OUT

After the age of 40, many of us begin to notice subtle yet frustrating changes in our vision, including difficulty reading fine print, increased eye fatigue, dryness, or blurred vision. While some of these are normal age-related shifts, the good news is that there's much we can do to support our eyes through holistic, proactive care.

As an ophthalmologist who blends traditional eye care with integrative and functional medicine, I've seen firsthand how small, daily eye-healthy habits can preserve clarity, comfort, and long-term vision.

Below are 3 evidence-based strategies to help maintain your vision after 40, reduce your risk of age-related eye conditions, and protect your most precious sense—your sight.

STRATEGY #1: NOURISH YOUR EYES FROM THE INSIDE OUT

Your eyes are among the most complex and metabolically active tissues in the body. They depend on a steady supply of antioxidants, healthy fats, vitamins, minerals, and phytonutrients to function optimally.

Many people are deficient in key nutrients that support ocular health—especially macular carotenoids like lutein and zeaxanthin, which act as natural internal sunglasses and blue light filters. These compounds protect against oxidative stress, macular degeneration, and screen-induced eye strain. Rich sources include leafy greens, egg yolks, corn, and orange or yellow fruits and vegetables.

Other essential nutrients include:

Anthocyanins—Found in berries, they support retinal health and may reduce eye pressure, protecting against glaucoma.

Omega-3s (DHA and EPA)—Present in fatty fish and flax or chia seeds, they reduce inflammation and help stabilize the tear film.

B Vitamins—Important for mitochondrial energy and the health of the optic nerve and retina.

Vitamins C and E—Antioxidants that help protect the lens from oxidative damage.

If this list feels overwhelming, the simplest first step is adopting a colorful, plant-rich diet that includes foods like spinach, kale, orange and yellow bell peppers, dark berries, and wild-caught salmon. Learn more about these nutrients and other therapeutic foods for eye health in my bestselling book, *Beyond Carrots: Best Foods for Eye Health A to Z*, available on Amazon.

STRATEGY #2: DAILY EYELID HYGIENE

Dry eye is one of the most common—and often underrecognized—conditions I see in my practice. It affects people of all ages and backgrounds and is made worse by long hours of screen use and environmental toxins.

What many don't realize is that dry eye often stems from dysfunction in the meibomian glands, tiny oil glands in the eyelids that keep the tear film stable. As we age, these glands can become blocked or damaged, leading to inflammation, blurred vision, and discomfort—a condition known as meibomian gland dysfunction (MGD).

Fortunately, daily eyelid hygiene can help prevent or reverse these issues. Think of it like brushing, flossing, and rinsing your teeth: a simple, non-invasive ritual that protects long-term health. Here's a three-step eyelid care routine I recommend:

Warm compress for 5–10 minutes using a heat-retaining eye mask (such as a Bruder mask with patented moisture beads).

Lid cleansing with a pre-medicated wipe to remove oil, debris, and bacteria.

Hypochlorous acid spray to balance the ocular surface microbiome and reduce inflammation and Demodex mites.

For a comprehensive dry eye solution, explore the Dry Eye Bundle, available in my online store, *Ageless* by Dr. Rani, which includes all the essentials for at-home eyelid care, along with a complete omega supplement called *Soothe*, designed to support tear film health.



Prevention begins with awareness—and simple, consistent habits. By incorporating nutrient-rich foods, daily eyelid hygiene, and targeted supplementation into your wellness routine, you can protect your sight and feel more vibrant at any age.

Let's bring eye health to the forefront of the holistic wellness conversation—because your vision is worth it.

To learn more about how to protect and preserve the precious gift of sight, download my free guide: 3 Things You Must Do to Avoid Vision Loss and Blindness.

Connect with Dr. Banik: <https://gravatar.com/drranibanik>



STRATEGY #3: TARGETED EYE HEALTH SUPPLEMENTS

Even the most nutrient-rich diet may fall short of meeting your eyes' specific needs, especially if you're spending hours on screens each day. Supplementation is an effective way to deliver therapeutic levels of protective nutrients, such as the macular carotenoids and bioflavonoids, that may be hard to get from food alone.

In my clinical practice, I recommend a three-part eye health regimen to support retinal integrity, optimize optic nerve function, and provide dry eye relief:

A multivitamin with complete B vitamins, vitamins A, C, E, and minerals, PLUS bioflavonoids clinically proven to support the retina and optic nerve.

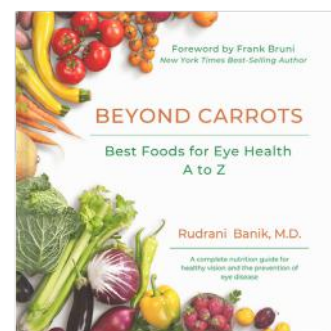
A macular carotenoid complex with at least 20 mg of lutein and zeaxanthin, plus berry extracts and antioxidants.

A complete omega formula that includes not just DHA and EPA, but also GLA (gamma-linolenic acid), omega-7, and omega-9 for broad-spectrum anti-inflammatory benefits.

This eye health supplement stack supports comfort, visual clarity, and overall systemic health. If you're looking to support your eyes naturally from within using the power of nutrients, explore the Ageless Eyes Bundle at shop.rudranibanikmd.com. It includes a curated trio of supplements with ingredients backed by science—and by my 25 years of patient care.

A LIFETIME OF HEALTHY VISION STARTS NOW

Vision changes may be a part of aging, but they aren't something to accept passively. Whether you're 40, 50, 60, or beyond, now is the time to take charge of your eye health. Don't wait for problems like dry eye, cataracts, or macular degeneration to develop.





WAVES OF *Healing*: A POWERFUL LESSON OF DETERMINATION

BY GERI MARONEY

Today was the day.

Today was surgery day.

It was 5 am, and I was wrapped in my beautiful green hospital gown, sitting in my bed, covered with a lovely warm white blanket to keep me warm. I had completed all the pre-surgery preparations, and I was now just waiting for my name to be called. I was about to spend the next 14 hours in surgery to remove cancer and rebuild my body.

It had been an emotional journey to get to this point, and I was both relieved and scared. Fourteen hours seemed like an awfully long time to be on an operating table under anesthesia. I was more afraid of not waking up after fourteen hours than I was of having cancer removed from my body.

When my girls were little, I tried to teach them that they had more inner courage than they thought they did. When they were too afraid to try something new, I would tell them they just needed to be “big and brave.” As I laid in the bed, the lesson of “big and brave” came back to me. Now it was my turn. I didn’t want to go under anesthesia, being scared; I wanted to think happy thoughts and try to relax. I had to be “big and brave.”



Big and Brave™

Then, the lights went out. Totally dark on the entire floor. It wasn't a little blip in the lighting; it was a full-on blackout. Nurses and doctors were scrambling around to figure out what had just happened and how they would get things back to normal.

As if I wasn't scared enough, I was now full-blown panicked. I thought it was a sign from God that I should RUN. Run away and don't go through with this fourteen-hour surgery. Something bad was going to happen. Get out of this bed and RUN.

Well, of course, that wasn't happening, and within 10 minutes the lights were back on, and things were back on track. The nurse announced that "everything was OK". No ma'am, everything was NOT OK I was terrified. At that point, my doctor poked his head through the curtain and said, "We're up in 5 minutes." NOOOO, I wasn't ready yet; I was still recovering from what I thought was a secret sign from God to not go through with this surgery.

I closed my eyes, took a deep breath, and prayed, "Dear God, please hold my hand and see me through a successful surgery. Guide my doctors with a steady hand, a clear mind, and an open heart. Please keep me strong as I fight through this journey." Amen.

I remember being so relieved when I opened my eyes in the ICU. I had done it; I had made it through surgery! I remember feeling relieved to have this part of my journey over, and I knew my team of doctors and nurses would watch me closely and keep me safe. Now it was time to rest.

Fast forward a few days, and I was leaving the ICU to head to a regular room. It was a big day. I had spent four days in the ICU, so going upstairs to a quiet room felt like winning the lottery!

But my excitement didn't last long. Later that evening, I had my first panic attack. Out of nowhere came a surge of absolute terror. I couldn't breathe, and I couldn't stop crying. I was sure I was having a heart attack. The nurse tried to help me through it, but nothing worked. I felt like my world had crashed, and I would never find my way back to "normal". It was the scariest moment in my life to that point.

The nurse didn't know what else to do, so she decided to call my sister for reinforcement. Maybe my sister could talk to me and calm me down. While I sobbed uncontrollably, my sister began to calmly explain that this was just a storm, and it wouldn't last forever.

She's a sailor, and she likened my panic attack to a storm at sea. While I cried, she explained that when facing a powerful storm, the best strategy for a sailor is to turn the boat's bow directly into the wind and waves. This is known as "heaving to". By turning the bow into the wind, it can rise up

and over the waves, rather than crashing through them.

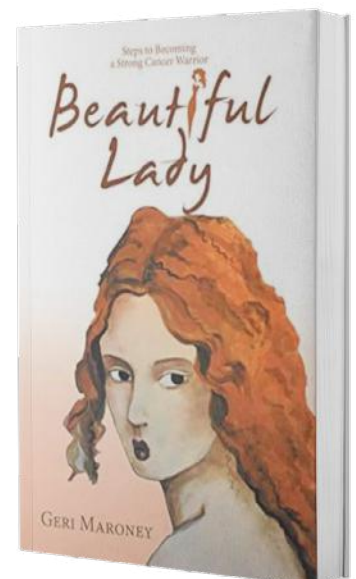
That was it. I needed to be a sailor. I needed to "heave to" and turn my boat directly into the wind to ride out this storm. That's what I would do. Now I felt safe.

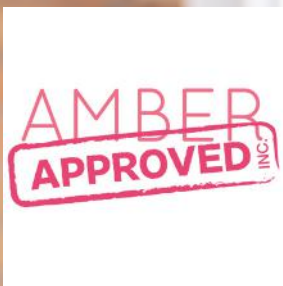
I remember this story often. When I'm overwhelmed or scared, I visualize being in a sailboat and following the directions of heaving-to. Fear is much like a storm; it overwhelms, but it doesn't last forever. With practice, we can overcome fear. We can stand with it and honor its power without allowing it to completely consume us.

Through my cancer journey, I learned a lot about the absolute power of fear. Although fear happens every day to everybody, and it is often the result of our mind fixating on images of what "might happen," the fear I experienced through my cancer journey felt different. It was more about what was happening right now. Each step felt so intense, from surgery to ICU to the extreme chest pain from nerve damage.

But now I had a way to cope. Now, each time I felt overwhelmed with fear, I could focus on being a sailor. I could remember that storms don't last forever, and I could focus on how beautiful things were once that storm cleared.

In her deeply personal book, *Beautiful Lady*, Geri Maroney courageously shares her cancer journey, offering hope and resilience to women facing similar challenges. With raw honesty and gentle humor, she provides inspiring insights and emotional tools to help patients navigate their transformative experience. Order your copy today. link - <https://www.amazon.com/Beautiful-Lady-Becoming-Strong-Warrior/dp/1982248432>





5 MYTHS ABOUT HEALING YOUR RELATIONSHIP WITH FOOD

BY AMBER ROMANIUK

Emotional Eating, Digestive & Hormone Expert Amber Romaniuk Misconceptions about food struggles keep people stuck—here's what's really true about fully healing.

When it comes to food struggles, there are countless myths that keep people feeling broken, hopeless, or convinced they'll never change. If you've ever felt stuck in cycles of emotional eating, binge eating, restriction, or food obsession, you're not alone—and you're not cursed to live this way forever.

The mainstream tends to water down the complex nature of emotional eating and bingeing, suggesting quick fixes or diets as the solution. But these approaches often only deepen the cycle. The myths you may have been told—about willpower, weight loss, or needing stricter control—can make you feel like the problem is you. But the truth is, none of these myths reflect the real, deeper reasons people struggle with food.

Let's clear the air and explore five of the most common myths about healing your relationship with food—and the truths that can set you free.

MYTH #1: EMOTIONAL AND BINGE EATING ARE PERMANENT STRUGGLES YOU CAN'T FULLY OVERCOME.

One of the most limiting beliefs people carry is that emotional eating or binge eating is a lifelong struggle. Maybe you've tried diets, cleanses, or even programs that helped for a while—but the old patterns returned, leaving you feeling like you'll always be stuck. Or maybe you were told you will be in “recovery” forever.

The truth is, these patterns are not permanent. Emotional eating is often a coping mechanism, a way to soothe stress, numb emotions, or temporarily fill a void. Once you begin addressing the root causes—like unworthiness, perfectionism, or learning how to feel through emotions—you can start to shift how you respond to triggers.

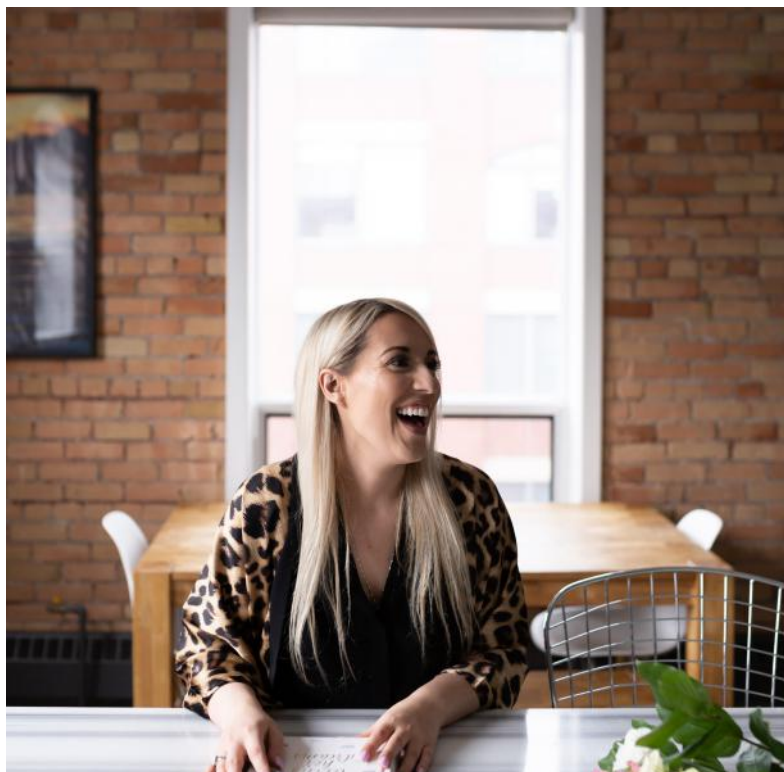
The habits and thought patterns tied to self-sabotage with food can be fully rewired. With the right support, tools, and compassion, you absolutely can fully heal your relationship with food. It doesn't mean you'll never face stress or emotion—it means food no longer has to be your only coping strategy. This helps you build confidence that you can work through anything and use healthier tools to cope.

MYTH #2: WILLPOWER IS THE ANSWER, JUST LIKE YOU'VE BEEN TOLD.

Diet culture loves to sell the idea that all you need is more self-control. If you could just say no to the cookies, stop eating after dinner, or white-knuckle through your cravings—you'd finally be free. But if you've tried relying on willpower, you already know it doesn't last.

Why? Because food struggles aren't about willpower. They're about unmet emotional needs, stress, and deeply ingrained patterns. When you're exhausted, overwhelmed, and your nervous system is stuck in “fight or flight,” or you're carrying shame, willpower is one of the first things to disappear.

Healing requires compassion and curiosity about why you want to use food to cope—not force. Instead of trying harder to “be good or strict,” the real work comes from understanding what your unique set of emotional and binge eating triggers are.



When you identify the emotional drivers—such as stress at work, loneliness, people-pleasing, weight-gain insecurities, hormone issues, or self-criticism—you open the door to making sustainable change. You begin to give yourself what you truly need, rather than a quick fix.

Willpower runs out. Healing happens when you address the roots and work through your triggers.

MYTH #3: TRIGGERS ARE YOUR ENEMY—YOU SHOULD AVOID THEM AT ALL COSTS.

Most people fear their triggers. Maybe it's a stressful day, a certain food, or being around family who comments on your body. Triggers feel like failures waiting to happen. The instinct is to avoid them or blame yourself when they show up.

But here's the truth: your triggers are teachers. They aren't there to punish you—they're showing you where you're out of alignment, where emotional wounds need healing, and where you're being called to grow and step more into your power.

When you stop seeing triggers as enemies, you start to see them as guideposts. If every time you feel unworthy at work, you turn to food, that's valuable information. It points you toward where you need support, boundaries, or healing.

Fully overcoming emotional eating means leaning into your triggers with curiosity, not shame. They're not proof that you're broken—they're invitations to build a deeper, more empowered relationship with yourself.

MYTH #4: LOSING THE WEIGHT WILL FINALLY MAKE YOU HAPPY.

This is one of the biggest cultural myths: that weight loss equals happiness. Many women believe that if they could just hit a number on the scale or fit into a certain size, they'd finally feel confident, loved, and free.

But here's the hard truth: weight loss without emotional healing doesn't create lasting happiness. Many people lose weight and still feel unworthy, obsessed with food, or terrified of regaining it. The scale can't give you self-worth—it can only distract you from doing the deeper work.

What truly brings peace is learning to value yourself beyond your body. Healing your relationship with food, building self-compassion, and dismantling negative self-talk are what create lasting freedom. When you no longer base your worth on your weight, you break the cycle of chasing happiness in numbers that can never satisfy you. And often, it's easier to reach and maintain your natural set point with weight when you've done this deeper work.

Happiness isn't found in shrinking yourself—it's found in expanding your self-worth.

MYTH #5: MORE NUTRITION KNOWLEDGE WILL HELP YOU OVERCOME EMOTIONAL EATING.

It's easy to believe that if you just knew more about what to eat, when to eat, or which foods are "good" or "bad," you'd finally stop struggling. And with the flood of health advice online, many people keep searching for that one perfect piece of information.

But knowledge alone isn't enough. Most women I work with already know what they "should" be eating. The problem isn't a lack of information—it's the unworthiness and emotional drivers underneath the behavior.

If you're eating to numb stress, escape shame, or soothe loneliness, no amount

of food rules will fix the pattern. In fact, too much focus on nutrition knowledge can backfire, creating obsession and guilt instead of balance.

Overcoming emotional eating requires addressing both the mind and the body. Knowledge is helpful, but without emotional healing and building self-worth, it won't create the lasting food freedom you're longing for.

The Truth About Healing Your Relationship With Food

The myths around food struggles keep people trapped—believing they're broken, weak, or destined to repeat the same patterns forever. But the truth is, you can fully heal your emotional relationship with food.

Healing isn't about white-knuckling with willpower, chasing happiness through weight loss, or collecting more nutrition rules. It's about compassion, curiosity, and having the courage to take a different approach by addressing the deeper emotional roots of your behavior. It's about seeing your triggers as teachers, building self-worth, and learning new tools to cope with life's stress without turning to food.

If you've been stuck in the cycle, know this: you are not alone, you are not broken, and freedom is absolutely possible. If I could go from eating out of my garbage and even dumpster diving for the cookies I threw away to helping thousands of women globally claim food and Body Freedom, you can too. Every step you take toward healing your relationship with food is a step toward reclaiming your power, peace, and joy.

Connect with Amber:

<https://linktr.ee/amberromaniuk>

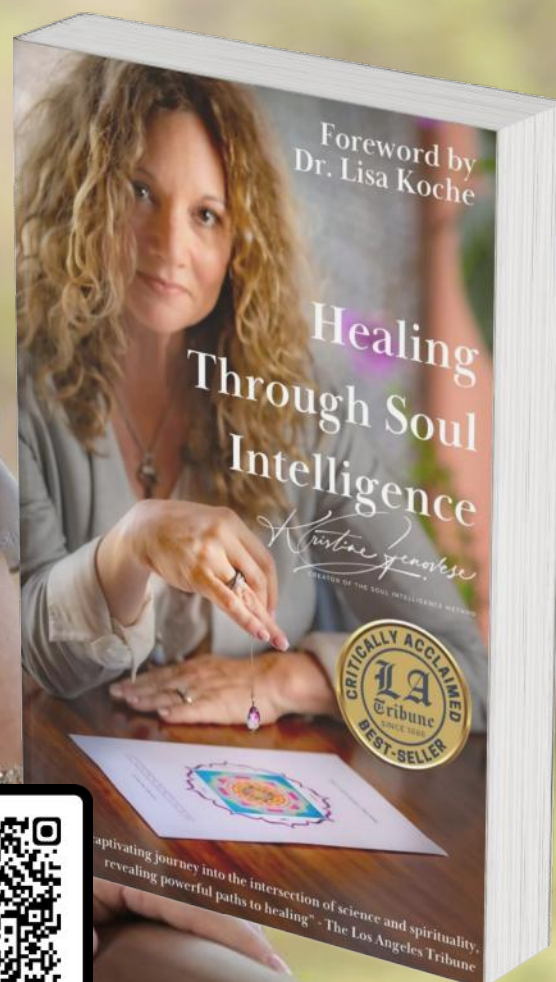


In Healing Through Soul Intelligence(R),

Kristine Genovese reveals a revolutionary approach to healing that taps into the deepest levels of our being. Drawing on her experience in both corporate America and the realms of spiritual growth, Genovese introduces readers to the SOUL INTELLIGENCE(R) Method—a bioenergetic system that bridges science and spirituality to address the root causes of physical, emotional, and energetic imbalances. This isn't just another wellness book—it's a

“paradigm-shifting work that revolutionizes how we approach healing in the 21st century. At a time when humanity seeks to integrate scientific understanding with spiritual wisdom, "Healing Through Soul Intelligence" delivers a comprehensive roadmap for genuine transformation.

-Jana Short, Editor-in-Chief, Best Holistic Life Publishing House





HOW OUR 'LIFE STORIES' CAN KEEP US SICK AND STUCK

BY KARYN SHANKS MD

I often tell the story about my son's high school essay on his heroes. The assignment was to write about just one, but as he told my husband and me, "I couldn't think of just one, so I wrote about my two heroes."

One was his grandfather, who survived "the troubles" in Northern Ireland to go on to become a world-famous neurosurgeon and all-round wonderful human being.

The other hero was me.

"Really? Why?" I asked, stunned.

"Because" he explained (I'm sure there was a "dumbass" in there somewhere), "look at everything you went through growing up, all the obstacles you overcame, and how much you've accomplished."

That rocked my world. It upended the most insidious, deeply embedded, and disempowering story of my life. A story I clung to because it was the story that kept me alive when I was too young to know differently. A story that kept me safe. A story I didn't know was a story, believing it was a fact of my life. Beyond the suffering it caused me, it drove persistent stress and a vigilant approach to life that cost me dearly.

His story allowed me to reimagine my own past. Rather than unlovable, unwanted, a 'loser' (their story, not mine), I was a savvy girl who made her way in life on her own from a very young age and did a freaking brilliant job. I was a hero.

Key to my evolution was not to condemn my old story. It helped me survive my childhood. But holding onto it held me back and kept me in pain. Most importantly, while the story kept me safe at one time (small children blame themselves rather than their caregivers to secure the lifeline of connection), it didn't see me as I truly was or am.

So, I did what I'm now teaching others to do.

I accepted 100% responsibility for myself and my healing, releasing blame to liberate myself from the past. (This doesn't mean we pretend we weren't wronged. It means we call our energy back from the challenges we faced that we didn't cause.)

I practice my new story every day, with tenderness and reverence for how I can direct my transformation.

Shifting out of disempowering stories is necessary for healing.

The most tenacious, insidious, and tricky of all the roadblocks to our healing—any healing—are the stories we tell that disempower us from our own wisdom and agency to create healing lives. From the cultural stories that define what healing means to the familial stories about what makes us worthy, many of our stories keep us stuck: Stuck in disempowering beliefs that limit what we do and stuck in the persistent survival biology those beliefs activate inside us. Without these stories and their harmful effects standing in our way, we'd flow; we'd step so easily into our potential and possibilities.

As storytelling creatures, we'll always work with our stories as part of our healing, mining them for their wisdom. As my teacher, Gabor Maté, likes to say, "it all goes down in your mind." What does he mean? All the obstacles, "impossible" circumstances, beliefs, and assumptions we make about absolutely everything are created in our minds. They're not objective reality. They're not reality at all. They're constructs. We manufacture them to make sense out of what we hear, what we're taught, how we perceive the world around us, everything.

The more unconscious we are of our stories and the more tenacious they are, the higher our resistance to scrutinize and change them. These stories drive our lives and are usually associated with trauma. The trauma of being hurt, of not belonging, of feeling unworthy, of losing control. When looked at with curiosity, these stories hold the keys to what we most need.

What does it sound like to have a disempowering story stand in the way of your healing?

- I can't.
- I don't have time.
- I don't know how.
- Who am I to ... (you fill in the blanks)
- It's too hard. It's too lonely.
- I don't deserve this.
- I'm stuck.
- This is my genetic destiny.
- This is who I am.

Endless stories. Roadblocks to healing 100% of the time.



Scrutinize your own obstacles to healing.

When you're feeling stuck or don't know what to do, ask: What's the story I'm telling here? I don't have time to learn this new food plan. I can't get to bed any earlier than I do. I don't believe my thoughts have anything to do with my health. My feelings can't be making me sick. I have too much to do. I'm no more stressed than anyone else. If there was something more to do to help me, my doctor would tell me.

Be entirely honest with yourself. Also be tender, compassionate, and curious because we tell stories for good reasons. We're not trying to trip ourselves up. They may no longer serve us, but they did at one time. All stories are worthy of our respect, even if it's time to change them.

Follow that question with another: what's the feeling, sensation, or energy state I'm telling my story about? Then check in with your body. What's it saying?

I'm scared. I'm lonely. I'm afraid to change. I'm afraid to let go of control. I'm afraid of being left out. I'm afraid to feel. I'm afraid to fail. I'm afraid of disappointment. I'm afraid to lose what's propped me up. I'm overwhelmed.

Breathe. Be very gentle with yourself. These stories served a profound purpose at one time. They may have kept you alive. Or they serve powerful societal-cultural narratives you've trusted your entire life. Even if they're not entirely true, you've felt safe with them.

As you breathe and feel, stay curious. What's the wisdom in this story? How can you shift the story to better serve your current needs? Even if the shift is simply, "I soften my stories, I breathe space around what I've always known for sure," and I ask, "What else is possible now?"

Keep breathing. Stay gentle. Hold yourself and your story with compassion.

The key to changing disempowering stories is this: No matter how hard your story is to change, practice with tenderness always makes progress. And we don't just "let go" of our disempowering stories, do we? We shift them. Patiently, with baby steps, we shift into new words, better stories, and our own magnificence. Into our liberation.

Continue exploring the stories that keep us sick, suffering, and stuck in my new book, *UnBroken: Reclaim Your Wholeness*, 2025.

Connect with Karyn: linktr.ee/karynshanksmid

KARYN SHANKS MD
Heart. Hope. Healing.

author of *UnBroken & Heal*
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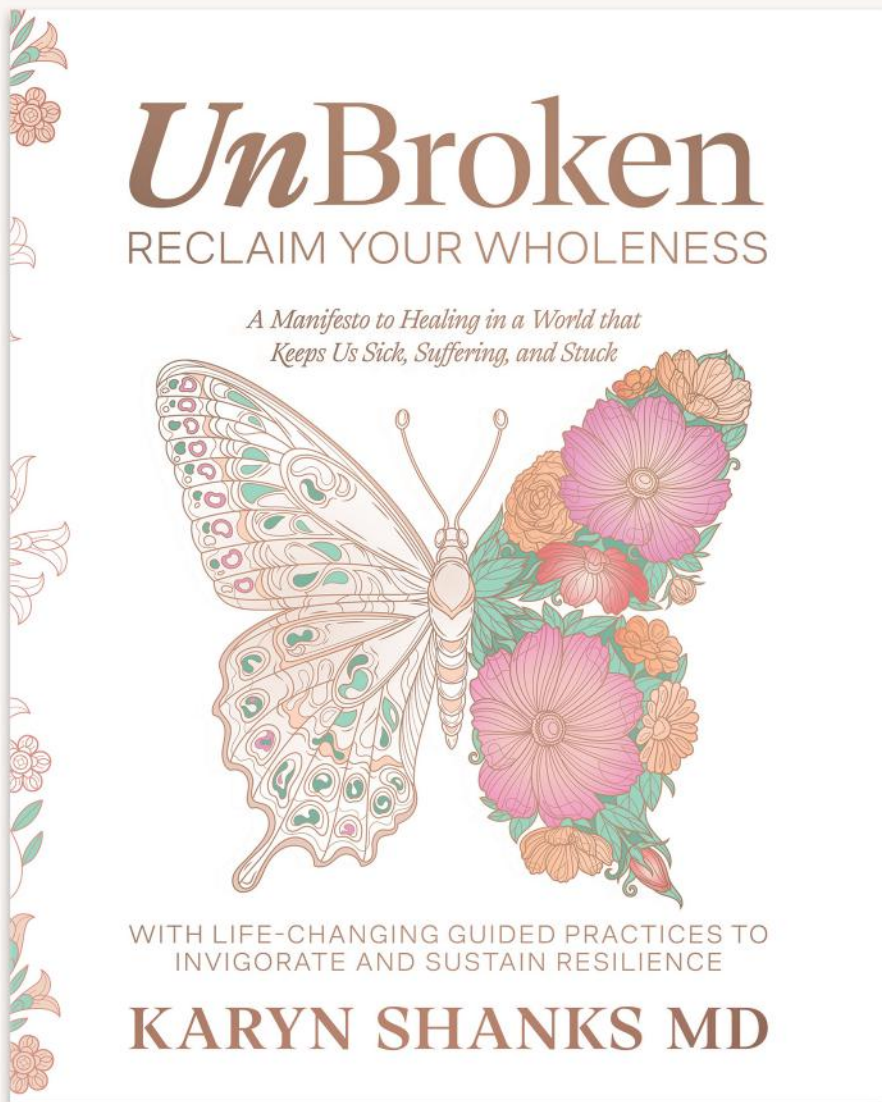


GROUNDBREAKING NEW BOOK FROM
KARYN SHANKS MD

physician, author, teacher

UnBroken radically reframes our suffering:

The problem isn't us. The problem is how we see ourselves when we're vulnerable and in need: through a lens of brokenness and disconnection.



Karyn Shanks MD integrates the sciences of directable human potential—epigenetics, neuroplasticity, systems-based functional medicine, and transformational psychology—with the lived wisdom that safety, compassion, and story are the true foundations of healing.

*“A masterwork of wisdom and right thinking
... so important in these times.”*

Best Holistic Life



Our Dreams CAN TAKE US HOME

BY STEVEN DANIEL

The 15-hour drive from Los Angeles, CA, to Boulder, CO, is a meditation along some of the most scenic highways in North America. I loaded a moving van and planned to drive through the night without stopping at a roadside hotel. After ten hours, the hypnotic effect of the road lulled me into a sleepy state. I pulled over at a turnout and curled up on the worn blue vinyl bench seat, using my cold-weather jacket as a makeshift pillow. As I closed my eyes, I could hear cars speeding by on the highway 10 feet away.

Within seconds, I was surrounded by silence. I felt a movement as I unhooked from my body and rose upward, passing through the van's roof. My sense of self was transformed, as if suspended at the edge of the universe, looking into another universe. Free of worldly constraints, I traveled into a vast expanse of endless space. I was drawn to a vibrant blue and orange sky as the sun dipped over the horizon. In that moment, there was nothing to do, nothing to change, nothing to become. Only being. I glanced down at the van. Suddenly, I was lying on the seat. I sat up in front of the steering wheel and felt fully rested, as if I had slept for hours, yet only a minute had passed on the dashboard clock.

The experience gave me the awareness of my potential to cross physical boundaries and experience connection to other worlds. I was filled with a powerful sense of enlightenment. Enlightenment is a momentary experience when we step away from the noise and touch the infinite within us. Buddhism and Zen philosophies acknowledge that life gives us opportunities for moments of enlightenment. It's up to us to receive them.

Have you ever woken from a dream and questioned if it was real? This is your deeper self, the timeless intelligence of your essence, interfacing with other worlds. Our essence is our fundamental self, existing beyond the boundaries of the physical world, and cannot be fatigued by the rigors of life. It's no surprise we seek spiritual practices, such as quiet contemplation, meditation, and yoga, to help us unhook from the external world and foster connection.

EXERCISE: UNDERSTANDING OUR DREAMS

Our dreams can be difficult to understand, leading us to struggle with hidden meanings. We wake up after a dream-filled night, mindful of our mysterious adventures, and ask ourselves, "What did the dream mean?" Since dreams operate in the realm of our emotional landscape, the better question to ask is:

"How did the dream make me feel?"

Our mental, psychological, and spiritual landscape represents our inner world, which contains our emotions as feelings and sensations. Identifying feelings from our dreams can help us understand them. Our mind may struggle to understand our dreams, yet our essence helps us see with better clarity. In this exercise, you can learn to understand your dreams with your essence as the lens.

The Exercise:

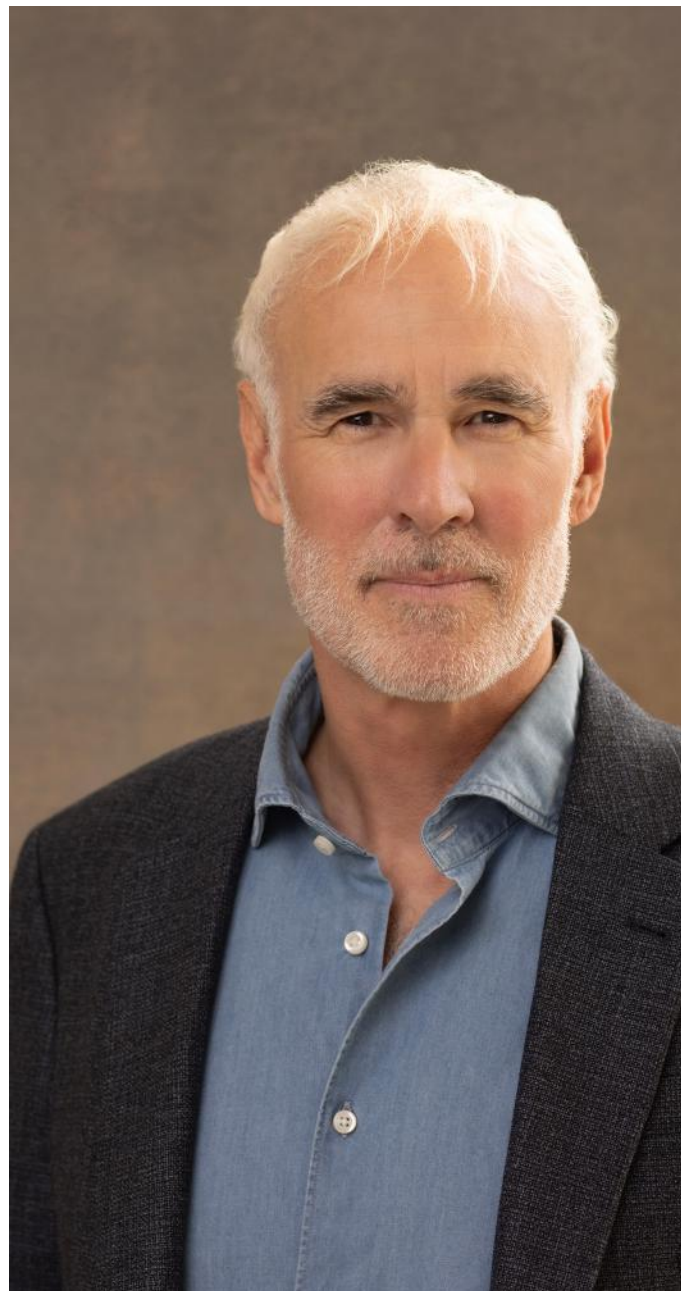
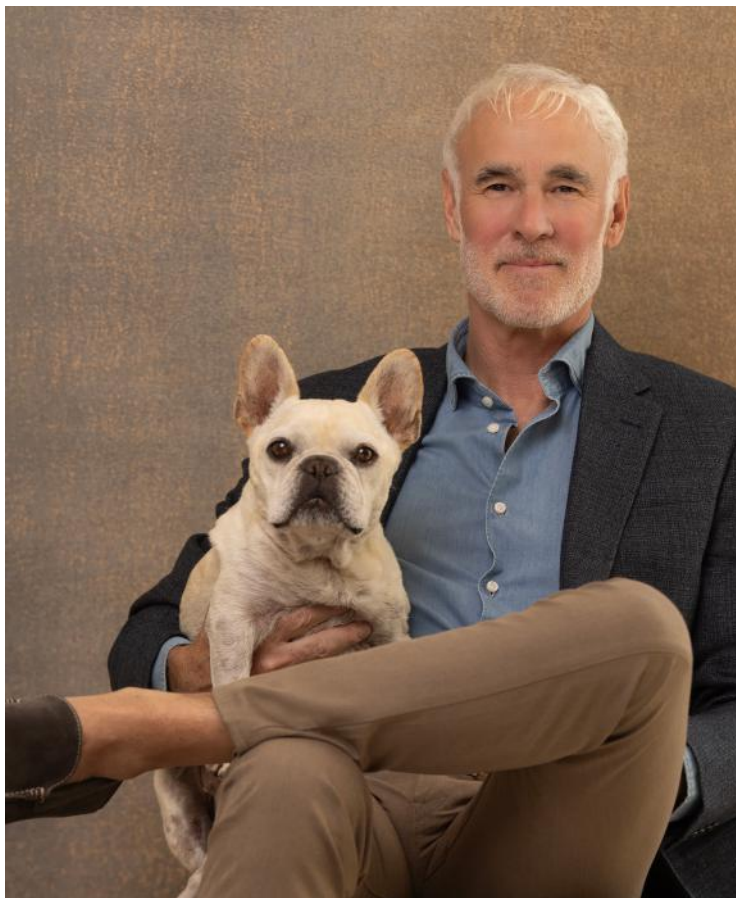
When you wake up after a dream, note your memories and how the dream made you feel. Identify and name one or two feelings that encompass your dream. Allow yourself to pause on these feelings.

Say to yourself, "The dream made me feel _____."

Take slow, deep breaths until you relax. Inhale through your nose and exhale comfortably. Visualize oxygen filling your chest and stomach. Ask the cells in your body to relax. Be present in the stillness within you.

Now, ask, "Why do I feel this way about my dream?"

Allow your question to remain unanswered. Be with the feeling and allow it to remain with you. Resist the urge to try to understand it. Now let the feeling go. Send your feeling into the universe, and quite simply, forget about it. Later, you may find a unique understanding of your dream. This is your essence at work, doing what it does best by connecting you to the insights and intuition from your Higher Self. Allow yourself time to process your question.



Your willingness to pull back the hidden layers of your inner world tunes you into the present-moment awareness of your timeless, intelligent self, your essence.

I recently had a dream where I was standing in the side yard of my home when my wife and her friend brought something big wrapped in a blanket. I thought, "What do they have?" Then, my wife said, "It's moving. Let's get it inside." They entered the yard, gently placed the object on the ground, and lifted the blanket, revealing a giant tortoise. I was surprised. I knew my wife's love of animals, and I figured the tortoise was coming to live with us. I woke up feeling irritated. I asked myself why I was feeling edgy. Then I sent the feeling out to the universe to be processed by my timeless, intelligent self, my essence, and my Higher Self.

Later, the answer came back to me. The tortoise was me, or an aspect of me that I was feeling angry with. The dream was telling me what I needed to do. Like the tortoise, I needed to slow down, be patient, and care for myself in a nurturing and loving way.

Connect with Stephen: brighterrealms@gmail.com



KEEP MOVING, *LIVE* AGELESS

BY KELLY MARTIN

HOW LIGHT THERAPY IS CHANGING THE WAY WE RECOVER

Movement is life. Whether you're chasing peak performance or simply want to stay active and independent, the ability to move freely defines how we live, feel, and age. But pain too often gets in the way, limiting mobility and quality of life.

Epoch Lasers is rewriting that story. Instead of masking symptoms with pills, they're using light to work with the body's natural repair systems, helping people move better, recover faster, and avoid the medication trap.

WHEN PAIN HALTS PROGRESS

A sore knee or stiff shoulder can snowball into lost strength, confidence, and independence. Medications and injections may bring short-term relief, but side effects and long-term risks often follow.

Epoch's founder witnessed this firsthand when a close friend, who was prescribed opioids for what began as a routine injury, developed an addiction that derailed both her health and career. Watching that unfold left a lasting impact and sparked a mission: to create a safer, drug-free path forward that works with the body rather than against it.

HOW LIGHT SPARKS RECOVERY

At the core of Epoch's devices is photobiomodulation, a process in which light is absorbed at the cellular level and sets off a chemical chain reaction. This reaction frees nitric oxide and increases production of adenosine triphosphate (ATP), the cell's primary energy source.

ATP powers countless metabolic processes, including rebuilding, repairing, and regenerating tissue. By boosting energy inside the cell, photobiomodulation supports the body's natural ability to reduce inflammation, restore balance, and accelerate healing.

When delivered at the right dose, near-infrared light penetrates deep enough to reach muscles, joints, tendons, and nerves: the very source of injury.

For you, that means:

- Less pain and stiffness
- Faster recovery from injury or activity
- Relief for arthritis, back pain, plantar fasciitis, tendonitis, neuropathies, and more

Both in clinics and at home, Epoch makes this advanced technology accessible – through high-power professional lasers for medical settings and the Epoch® 980 Helios, a compact device designed for personal use.

WHY 980 NM MATTERS

While many devices use red light or multiple wavelengths, Epoch is designed around a single, carefully selected wavelength of 980 nanometers. This near-infrared light is minimally absorbed by melanin, meaning it penetrates deeper without overheating the skin. It reaches muscles, joints, tendons, and nerves where pain starts, delivering consistent, comfortable, and effective results.

BEYOND NUMBING THE PAIN

Drugs and injections silence pain for a while. Light therapy works differently, targeting the root cause by activating the body's natural repair mechanisms. The result is longer-lasting relief without the risks of medication dependence.

Trusted by sports medicine doctors, physical therapists, and pro athletes, the Helios makes the same technology safe and simple for home use. At home, users can:

Treat pain in 20–30 minute sessions

Target areas such as the back, neck, knees, feet, shoulders, hips, and hands

Use it as often as needed, without side effects

WHY MOVEMENT MATTERS MORE THAN EVER

Staying active supports heart health, cognition, mood, and independence. But when pain limits movement, all of that momentum is lost.

Epoch's mission is to protect that momentum by giving people tools they can use daily, on their own schedule, without relying solely on clinic visits.

FROM CLINICS TO LIVING ROOMS

Epoch started with clinical lasers, building the expertise that still powers its technology in sports and medical settings. But when the pandemic limited access to in-person care, the demand for effective home solutions grew.

The Helios became the answer, a portable light therapy device people could use for recovery, pain management, and everyday comfort. Designed for home use but built on the same principles as Epoch's clinical lasers, it puts advanced therapy directly into people's hands.

"As a competitive weightlifter, I was devastated when an accident left me with two herniated discs, putting my plans on hold. After three rounds of Epoch's clinical laser and following up most days with the Helios at home, I was back to training within weeks. The improvement was incredible – now my whole family uses it."

– Erin M., personal trainer and weightlifter

A NEW ERA IN WELLNESS

The name "Epoch" was chosen with intention. It marks the beginning of a new era in how we think about aging, recovery, and self-care.

The Helios reflects a larger shift in wellness: toward natural, non-invasive technologies that support the body's own intelligence. It is about progress, resilience, and empowerment.

Ready to Take Back Your Movement?

You don't need to choose between pain and pills. Light-based therapy offers a safe, non-invasive way to restore balance, recover faster, and keep doing what you love.

With Epoch, you gain:

- Freedom from pain without side effects
- Faster healing from sports injuries and daily strains
- The ability to stay active, independent, and strong
- Technology trusted by clinics, now in your hands.

Scan the QR code to learn how light therapy can help you move and feel better.



HOW TO SUFFER

BY SIR JAMES GRAY ROBINSON, ESQ

It seems that many people go through life suffering, but they often don't realize they are doing it the wrong way.

To be a truly world-class sufferer, some requirements must be followed carefully. If you commit yourself to these rules, you can guarantee yourself a first-class ticket to misery. Ignore them, and you may accidentally end up with peace, joy, and happiness—so proceed with caution.

1. WORST-CASE SCENARIO THINKING

The golden rule of suffering is always to imagine the worst possible outcome. Whenever life presents an unexpected event or a challenge, your first thought should be about the potential disasters that might follow. If you are given an opportunity, immediately think about all the ways it will collapse. If you are surprised by change, assume it will ruin your life. Panic is essential. Do not breathe profoundly or calm yourself; instead, hold your breath so your body goes into fight-or-flight mode. Trust and faith are forbidden—assume you will end up broke, abandoned, and ashamed.

2. TAKE THINGS PERSONALLY

For optimal suffering, interpret every action around you as a personal attack. Someone didn't return your call? They must hate you. Someone forgot to invite you to lunch? They did it to wound you. You must believe that nothing in the universe happens without you being the direct target. God, fate, or karma is out to get you. Ignore blessings, kindness, or good fortune—they don't count. Only misfortunes matter, so magnify them.

3. YOUR WILL BE DONE

True suffering requires believing your way is the only right way. If people disagree with you or if life doesn't conform to your desires, assume that the fault lies entirely with others. Nothing is your responsibility. The idea that God or the universe may have better plans for you than you imagine must be rejected. Your way is supreme. If you don't get what you want, sulk, panic, and shut down. Misery will surely follow.

4. THE WORLD IS CONSPIRING AGAINST

You always assume that the reason you don't have what you desire—whether it's wealth, love, or success—is because the world is deliberately against you. Don't attribute setbacks to effort, discipline, or circumstance. Instead, conclude that life itself is unfairly targeting you. Spend hours researching all the ways society hates you. Assume a bullseye is painted on your back. Never, under any circumstances, take ownership of your choices. Victimhood is your most powerful weapon.

5. LIFE IS NEVER GOOD ENOUGH

This is a cornerstone of suffering. No matter what you achieve, look for someone who has more. If you buy a car, notice the person driving the luxury model and conclude you are worthless. If you cook a meal for friends, but they bring takeout, assume your efforts are meaningless. Never be content. Comparison is the thief of joy, and for suffering, you must embrace comparison fully. Happiness cannot coexist with envy, so make envy your constant companion.

6. NEVER LET GO

True sufferers cling to old wounds like cherished trophies. If someone insulted you decades ago, replay it endlessly in your mind. Relive betrayals, heartaches, and humiliations daily. Obsession is critical. Even if life improves, remind yourself constantly of how you were wronged. Gratitude, healing, and forgiveness are dangerous—they threaten to dismantle suffering. Reject them all.

7. BE A HATER

Misery loves company, so cultivate bitterness. If you are unhappy, spread it around. Draw others into gossip, criticism, and judgment. If someone is joyful, do your best to deflate their mood. Never encourage or uplift anyone, because kindness is toxic to suffering. Hate yourself, too. Self-love and compassion are poison; avoid them at all costs. Misery thrives in drama, so keep the melodrama alive.

8. MEDICATE

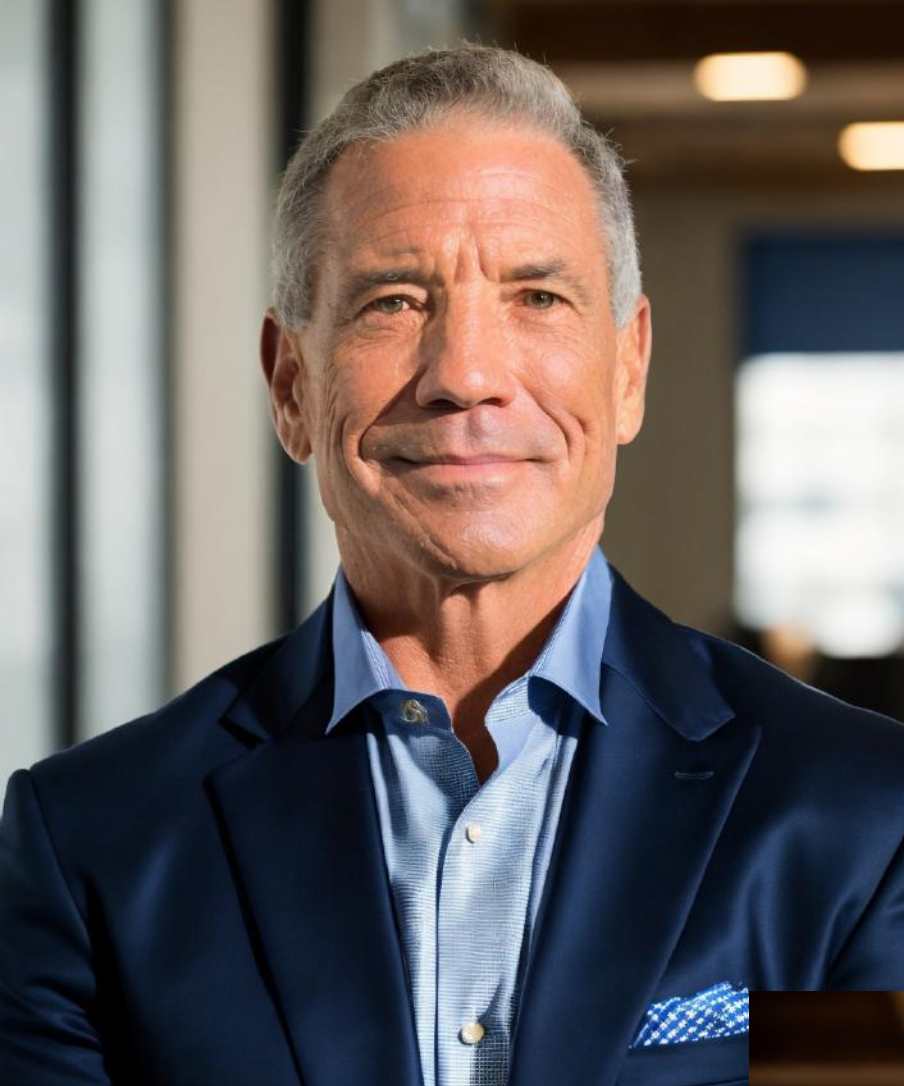
Sobriety is dangerous because it allows clarity. To perfect suffering, numb yourself with substances or distractions. Drink excessively, overeat, or lose yourself in endless scrolling. Embarrass yourself, make regrettable choices, and feed the cycle of shame. Reflection might reveal that you are responsible for your life, and we can't have that. Stay medicated, stay foggy, and suffering will bloom.

9. BE SELF-CENTERED

Another critical step is to shut out compassion. Don't love, don't give, and don't serve. Assume your pain is unique and incomprehensible. Avoid kindness at all costs because showing empathy might lead to connection, and connection softens suffering. Take from others but never give. Hoard attention, pity, and validation. Self-absorption is the cornerstone of misery.

10. SIT ON YOUR BUTT

Finally, the perfect posture for suffering is inactivity. Sit around, snack on junk food, and complain. Never exercise, meditate, or cultivate discipline—those habits build resilience. Instead, fixate on how unfair life is. Avoid growth. Laziness ensures stagnation, and stagnation guarantees misery.



16. EAT POORLY

Finally, to keep misery alive, fuel your body with garbage. Processed food, sugar, and chemicals will weaken your health and mind. Forget balance or nourishment. A sick body feeds a sick mind, and a sick mind guarantees suffering.

This guide is tongue-in-cheek, of course, but hidden within is the truth: if you avoid these behaviors, you will likely find yourself walking a very different path—the path of peace, joy, and genuine happiness.

Connect with Sir James Gray Robinson:

<https://bestholisticlife.info/SirJamesGrayRobinson>

11. BE RIGHT

Always cling to your perspective. Never entertain the thought that someone else might have a valid opinion. Say often, “I’m right and everyone else is wrong.” Alienate friends, coworkers, and even pets with your stubbornness. Isolation is fuel for suffering.

12. LIE WHENEVER POSSIBLE

Lies create chaos, and chaos breeds suffering. Lie to others, but more importantly, lie to yourself. Pretend you’re happy while you’re miserable. Pretend you’re successful when you’re struggling. Eventually, lies will entangle you in distrust and betrayal, and misery will multiply.

13. NEVER TAKE RESPONSIBILITY

Responsibility empowers people, so reject it. Always claim to be a victim of life’s cruelty. If something goes wrong, it is always someone else’s fault. Victims never change, and change threatens suffering. Stay powerless and blame others.

14. HAVE UNREASONABLE EXPECTATIONS

Set goals that are impossible to achieve and punish yourself for not reaching them. Demand perfection in everything you do. Beat yourself up daily for every perceived failure. Never practice gratitude or celebrate progress—focus only on shortcomings.

15. COVET ENDLESSLY

Long for everything you don’t have. Envy your neighbor’s job, car, or relationships. Assume happiness lies outside yourself. Never water your own grass—just stare longingly at the other side of the fence. This guarantees chronic discontent.





THE POWER BEHIND
**DANIELLE
MARGGRAF'S**

EMBODIED MILLIONS



Best Holistic Life: Danielle, for readers new to your work—how do you define “embodied millions,” and how is it different from traditional ideas of wealth?

Embodied millions isn't just about the number in your bank account — it's the frequency you hold in your body, the way you live, and the impact you create. Traditional wealth is often built from hustle, force, and external validation. Embodied millions is about becoming the woman who naturally holds, multiplies, and circulates abundance because her inner world, values, and energy are already a match for it. The millions are the byproduct — not the goal.

Best Holistic Life: You've said abundance isn't something we chase—it's something we become. What was the turning point where you fully embodied that truth?

My turning point came when I realized I was building success from a place of proving — even when the numbers looked good, my body was exhausted. I shifted from “How can I get more?” to “How can I be more aligned?” That's when money, opportunities, and the right clients started flowing in without the push. The more I lived in my own embodiment — in my rituals, boundaries, and pleasure — the more abundance found me.



Best Holistic Life: Many women have complex relationships with money. What's the first mindset shift you recommend for someone ready to change that story?

The first shift is to stop seeing money as something outside of you and start seeing it as an extension of your own energy. Your bank account is just a mirror — it reflects the worth you hold within. When you move from “I have to get money” to “I allow money to respond to me,” everything changes.

Best Holistic Life: Your book blends wealth creation with wellness and worthiness. How do these three pillars work together in real life?

Wealth without wellness burns you out. Wellness without worthiness keeps you small. And worthiness without wealth leaves your mission underfunded. These three are a trinity — your body, your self-worth, and your financial capacity are all interconnected. When one rises, the others have permission to rise too. My work is about raising all three simultaneously so you live and lead in overflow.



Best Holistic Life: Were there moments in your own journey where you felt wealth and self-worth were at odds—and how did you bridge that gap?

Absolutely. There was a time when I could make money but couldn't hold it — because part of me didn't feel worthy of keeping it. I bridged that gap by doing deep somatic work to release old stories and by making wealth-building a deeply personal, embodied practice. When you integrate your nervous system and your money mindset, they start working in harmony.

Best Holistic Life: The word “millions” can feel intimidating for some. How do you help people see it as expansive rather than out of reach?

Millions is just a number — it's not about the number itself, it's about the capacity it represents. I help women see that “millions” is simply more fuel for their mission, more freedom for their family, and more resources for their dreams. When you stop making millions mean “too much” and start seeing it as “more impact,” it becomes magnetic instead of intimidating.



Best Holistic Life: What role does daily embodiment—through movement, ritual, or self-awareness—play in building lasting abundance?

Daily embodiment is everything. You can't create lasting abundance from a disconnected body. Movement, ritual, and self-awareness keep your energy clean, your nervous system regulated, and your intuition sharp. The body is the house your wealth lives in — if it's neglected, abundance can't feel safe to stay.

Best Holistic Life: You've built a brand rooted in authenticity and alignment. How do you stay grounded while your visibility and influence grow?

I stay grounded by staying in my body and in my values. My rituals, my environment, and my boundaries are non-negotiable. My inner GPS is my Gide so I'm always checking in before I seek anything outside of me. I've developed a deep trust with myself and root in that I am just answering my call—no more, no less. I also curate my inner circle carefully — people who hold me in my truth, not just my title. And I regularly retreat from the noise so I can hear my own guidance.

Best Holistic Life: If someone is starting from a place of scarcity—financially or emotionally—what's the first small, tangible step toward their own “embodied millions”?

Start by finding one way, every day, to feel abundant now — before anything changes in your bank account. It could be savoring your morning coffee like it's a luxury, walking in nature and soaking in beauty, or setting a boundary that honors your worth. Small embodied acts of abundance compound into a new identity — and that identity attracts the money.

Best Holistic Life: What's the most common misconception you see about wealth in the personal development world, and how does your work challenge it?

The biggest misconception is that you have to grind or sacrifice to get there. And maybe in some ways you do but that's a different kind of grind— it comes from deep devotion to your path, your purpose and your pioneering spirit that won't let you stop because you have big work to do in the world. The trick is the way you do any of these things - falling in love with the process vs feeling like you have to is very different ways of moving. My work challenges the traditional grind and sacrifice mentality and conditioning by showing women that the more they honor their body, pleasure, and truth, the more money flows. Hustle is not the only way — in fact, it's the slowest way if it burns you out before you can enjoy it.

Best Holistic Life: Looking ahead to 2026, what's your personal “embodied millions” vision for yourself—and what's next for your mission?

By 2026, my vision is to see the Embodied Woman Membership Community thriving as a global network of women living their own version of embodied millions — women thriving in wealth, wellness, and worthiness all over the world. I see my work expanding through more in-person retreats, a certification program for my methodology, and strategic partnerships that amplify this movement. My mission is simple: to make embodied abundance the new normal for women everywhere.

TWELVE28•Rx

BEYOND HEALING: HOW TWELVE28RX IS REDEFINING HEALTH AND EMPOWERMENT

**BY MELANIE MANCIL,
BSN, FOUNDER OF TWELVE28RX**

When I think about what shaped me most, I return to my childhood. I was raised by a strong single mother who taught me resilience, independence, and the value of hard work. Watching her navigate life with courage planted a seed in me; a determination to build a life where women, families, and communities could not only survive but thrive. That seed grew into my nursing career, and ultimately, into the creation of Twelve28Rx.

I became a nurse because I wanted to help people heal. But I quickly learned that true health isn't just about treating symptoms, it's about addressing the whole person. Over the years, I realized my calling was bigger than the walls of a traditional clinic. I wanted to create something that could transform not only health outcomes but also people's lives and futures. That's how Twelve28Rx was born: a clinic built on honesty, sustainability, and empowerment.

A FOUNDATION OF TRUST AND TRANSPARENCY

The heart of my practice has always been honesty. Since day one, I've believed that trust begins with transparency. I've never been one to sugarcoat or give false promises. My patients have my personal cell phone number because real care doesn't stop at office hours. They know they can reach me anytime, day or night, not just because of what I say, but because I will be there every step of their journey.

That's the philosophy behind Twelve28Rx. We don't offer "quick fixes." Instead, we help patients embrace lifestyle-centered, sustainable solutions that last. Success here isn't measured by a scale alone; it's measured in the freedom people feel when they regain their health, their energy, and their confidence.

WEIGHT LOSS TRANSFORMATIONS: A RIPPLE EFFECT

Among the many services we provide, weight loss transformations are closest to my heart. Helping patients overcome the habits that have held them back, whether it's diet, sleep, or stress, is endlessly fulfilling. There's nothing like witnessing the moment someone realizes they are no longer trapped by old patterns.

And here's the beautiful part: transformation doesn't stop with the individual. When one person makes a change, their family often follows. I've seen patients inspire their children to adopt healthier eating habits, motivate their partners to get active, and spark an entire household into choosing wellness. That ripple effect fills me with pride and joy.





One thing people are always surprised to learn is that Twelve28Rx has grown almost entirely through referrals, not advertising. Our patients share their stories with their friends and families, and that trust has built our community. It's proof that when you put people first, everything else follows.

MORE THAN A CLINIC: A MOVEMENT

At its core, Twelve28Rx is not just an online clinic. It's a movement; one built on connection, empowerment, and community. Our dedication to individualized care and sustainable health solutions is what drives everything we do. We don't just want to see numbers improve on lab reports; we want to see people rediscover joy, freedom, and vitality in their everyday lives.

Every day, I remind myself: we are not in the business of temporary results. We are in the business of transformation.

EMPOWERMENT THROUGH THE AFFILIATE PROGRAM

My passion for health is deeply personal, but so is my passion for empowerment. Growing up with a single mother, I saw firsthand the challenges women face when it comes to financial independence. That experience inspired me to create a path within Twelve28Rx that goes beyond healthcare; one that gives people, especially women, the opportunity to build income, confidence, and freedom while making a difference in their communities.

That's where our Affiliate Program comes in.

At Twelve28Rx, anyone can become an affiliate, no medical background required. Affiliates earn 20% to 40% commission on every sale and receive everything they need to succeed: training directly from me, marketing tools, product education, and the support of an uplifting community.

But this program is not just about business. Affiliates aren't simply promoting products; they're helping people feel better, live better, and reclaim control of their health. Many of our affiliates begin as patients



themselves, then become advocates who share their stories with others. This creates a cycle of empowerment: better health leads to stronger confidence, which leads to meaningful work and financial independence.

It's a straightforward, sustainable model that rewards integrity and results. And it's one of the things I am most proud of, because it gives people the chance to change lives, including their own.

CLINICAL-GRADE SOLUTIONS YOU CAN TRUST

What makes Twelve28Rx unique is our commitment to providing clinical-grade, evidence-based solutions that patients can trust. Every product we offer is prescribed by trusted physicians in all 50 states and provided by top-tier 503A pharmacies.

Our flagship therapies include:

- Custom Formulated Berberine: supporting healthy blood sugar and metabolism.
- NAD+ Therapy: bypassing the stomach for superior absorption, powering energy, focus, cellular repair, and longevity.
- "Muscle and Bone" Protein Powder: a clean, supportive formula for strength and recovery.

We also offer many beneficial prescriptions, including GLP-1s for weight loss, prescription-strength hair restoration and skincare, as well as muscle-building and sexual health solutions. Looking ahead, we are expanding into innovative offerings like in-home red light therapy and microneedling. My vision is clear: to make Twelve28Rx a one-stop telehealth platform, where every patient can find trusted, sustainable solutions.

These are not quick fixes. They are tools: tools that, when combined with education and support, guide people toward lasting wellness.

A PROMISE TO MY PATIENTS AND COMMUNITY

As a nurse, my calling has always been to care. But as the founder of Twelve28Rx, my mission goes deeper: to empower. Whether it's a patient reclaiming their health, a family adopting healthier

habits, or an affiliate gaining financial freedom, I see every story as part of a bigger picture, a movement of people choosing to thrive.

Twelve28Rx is more than a clinic. It's a partner in your wellness journey, a community committed to growth, and a platform for empowerment. My promise is simple: to be honest, to be present, and to walk alongside you every step of the way.

To those reading this, know that your health is worth investing in, and so is your future. My mother's resilience shaped me, and it's my deepest hope that through Twelve28Rx, I can pass that strength on to you, to your family, and to the generations to come.

About the Author:

Melanie Mancil, BSN, is the founder of Twelve28Rx, an online health-and-wellness telehealth platform and affiliate program dedicated to sustainable solutions, empowerment, and community transformation. She grew her business 100% through referrals without advertising. Learn more at Twelve28Rx.com.

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EXPERT, SPEAKER, & ADVOCATE FOR
TRANSFORMATIVE HEALTH



T W E L V E 28



WHY FREEZING YOUR FACE FREEZES MORE THAN WRINKLES

BY CATHY GOLDSTEIN, AP





The science of expression, energy, and why movement keeps your face—and your brain—alive. We live in a culture obsessed with stopping the clock. Smooth skin, fewer lines, no wrinkles—it sounds tempting. But what if freezing your face doesn't just pause aging on the surface? What if it also slows the very energy and brain activity that keeps you vibrant, connected, and alive?

As a holistic physician who has worked with women for nearly four decades, I've seen how our faces tell more than our age. They reflect our energy, our emotions, and even the health of our brains. When we block or suppress expression, we don't just lose lines—we risk losing part of ourselves.

The truth is: expression is medicine. Movement in the face equals movement in the brain.

Why Expression Matters More Than "Frozen Beauty"

Research shows that our facial expressions are directly linked to the limbic system—the part of the brain that processes emotions and connections. When you laugh, smile, or frown, you're not only moving muscles—you're activating brain pathways that support resilience and emotional health.

But when expressions are stifled, whether from chronic stress, unresolved trauma, or cosmetic procedures, those pathways quiet down. Over time, this can make it harder to connect with others, process emotions, and even feel joy as fully as you could.

Your face is not just about appearance—it's a key part of your body's neurological and energetic health.

The Energy Highway of Your Face

Think of your face as a living network, part of the body's "energy highway." Fascia, lymph, and delicate muscles create a system designed for movement and flow.

Fascia keeps tissues flexible and responsive.

Lymph clears away buildup and supports healthy circulation. Micro-muscles express emotions and release energy patterns. When this network is flexible and moving, your skin looks alive, and your energy feels light.

When it stiffens or stagnates, the face can look dull, heavy, or prematurely aged.

The good news? Simple, daily practices can restore movement and keep that energy highway open. 5 Daily Practices to Keep Your Face—and Brain—Alive

Conscious Smiling

Start your day with 30 seconds of soft, genuine smiling in the mirror. Studies show smiling—even if you start with "fake it"—can trigger the release of neurotransmitters like dopamine and serotonin.

Facial Fascia Release

Massage your jawline, temples, and brow with clean hands or natural oil. This eases tension, encourages lymph flow, and brings a healthy glow to the skin.



Breath + Expression Reset

Take 3 deep breaths, then exaggerate a playful facial expression—stick out your tongue, widen your eyes, or puff your cheeks. It helps break holding patterns and refreshes both face and mood.

Hydration with Intention

Hydrate from within and without. Pair water with hydrating foods like cucumbers, watermelon, and leafy greens—and use skincare that helps your cells absorb and hold that hydration.

Midday Emotional Check-In

Pause and ask: What am I holding in my face right now? If your brow is furrowed or your jaw clenched, soften it. Releasing facial tension signals safety to your nervous system and restores calm.

A Holistic Perspective

A radiant, youthful face isn't about erasing every wrinkle—it's about keeping energy, movement, and expression alive. When your face is free to move, your brain is more active, your emotions flow more naturally, and your connections with others deepen.

So the next time you catch your reflection, don't just look for fine lines. Ask yourself: Am I allowing my face to fully express who I am?

Because when you keep your face alive with expression, you don't just look younger—you feel more alive.

Author Bio Cathy Goldstein, A.P., is a pioneer in Functional Esthetics™ and the founder of Tru Energy® Skincare, blending nearly 40 years of acupuncture, holistic medicine, and skincare innovation. Known for redefining beauty as expressive, energy-alive, and brain-connected, Cathy helps women embrace Energy-Optimized™ Living—inside and out. Learn more at www.truenergyskincare.com.



YOUR Inner Power RESET: WHAT TO RELEASE BEFORE THE NEW YEAR

BY THERESA BYRNE

December is the season of light, and it is one of my favorite months. Not just for the sparkle of lights or the comfort of warm drinks, but for the invitation it carries. This month isn't only the end of a year; it's the threshold into what's possible—something completely new. A doorway we get to walk through, lighter or heavier, depending on what we choose to carry forward.

The truth is, most of us step into January with our hands too full. We're holding onto old disappointments, unfinished goals, or the voice of our relentless inner bully whispering, "You should have done more. You should be further by now." Our inner voice is NOT US, and it doesn't mean harm, but it thinks it's keeping us safe; left unchecked, it drags us into another year already exhausted.

This is why I created this Inner Power Reset. It's a chance to reflect, release, and realign before the clock strikes midnight. Instead of charging into 2026 with any old baggage, you can step in clear, grounded, and ready to go.

STEP 1: REFLECT WITHOUT JUDGMENT

Reflection is powerful, but it's not a scorecard. Too often, people look back and only see the gap between where they are and where they thought they "should" be.

Which is just another opportunity to beat yourself up. Instead, I want you to reflect with curiosity.

Ask yourself:

- What am I proud of this year?
- What surprised me?
- Where did I feel most like myself?
- What felt heavy or out of alignment?

Write down your answers without editing or justifying. Even one or two words can give you

clues. Reflection like this isn't about dwelling; it's about understanding the terrain you've walked.

InPower® Tip: If your inner bully chimes in, gently notice it. Say, "Thank you for your concern," and then redirect back to curiosity. Curiosity leaves space for growth. Criticism closes it down.

STEP 2: RELEASE WHAT DOESN'T SERVE

The nervous system clings to what's familiar, even when it hurts. That's why intentional release is so powerful. Before you start adding new goals and visions, make space by letting go of what no longer fits.

Write down three things you're ready to release. Maybe it's a habit, a harsh belief about yourself, or a way of showing up in relationships that no longer works. Then choose a small ritual to symbolize your release.

- Rip up the paper and throw it away.
- Burn it in a fireplace or candle flame.
- Place it under a rock outside, giving it back to the earth.
- Your brain loves physical closure, like the action of letting go, which helps anchor the choice.

InPower® Tip: In martial arts, every bow is both respect and reset. After your ritual, bow to yourself. Acknowledge the courage it takes to release what's familiar, even when it no longer serves.

STEP 3: RESET YOUR ENERGY

Releasing clears space, but resetting restores strength. You can't create a new future from an exhausted state. A drained nervous system can't hold big dreams. That's why simple energy resets matter.





Try this:

Stand tall. Inhale through your nose. Exhale with a sharp “Ha!” sound three times. Repeat until you feel present and steady.

Shake out your hands, arms, and legs. Movement tells your brain, “I am safe; I am strong.” Take a brisk walk outside, even for five minutes, to reset your rhythm and your mind.

These small practices regulate your nervous system and recharge your mental clarity.

InPower® Tip: Energy doesn’t come from doing more. It comes from alignment. Even two minutes of deliberate reset can shift your state from scattered to centered.

STEP 4: CHOOSE WHAT TO CARRY FORWARD

Now that you’ve reflected and released, you have a choice: what do you want to carry into the new year? Instead of piling on resolutions that often fizzle by February, I encourage you to choose one guiding quality.

Ask yourself: What is the quality I most want to embody in 2026?

Maybe it’s courage. Maybe it’s calm. Maybe it’s creativity. Maybe it’s fun. Write it down and keep it visible ... on your mirror, in your phone, or as a screensaver.

This word becomes your north star. When you’re faced with decisions, ask: Does this bring me closer to my word or pull me away from it?

InPower® Tip: Qualities transform us in ways numbers can’t. Numbers motivate, but qualities shape who we become.

A NEW YEAR, A NEW YOU (ONLY IF YOU CHOOSE)

Here’s the truth: January 1 doesn’t magically transform our lives. If we carry the same old weight into the new year, we’ll end up repeating the same old patterns. But if we take time in December to reflect, release, reset, and choose, we step into the new year differently.

The Inner Power Reset isn’t about perfection. It’s about permission. Permission to stop beating yourself up for what didn’t happen. Permission to honor what did. Permission to release the labels or limits that no longer fit.

So before you raise your glass at midnight, take ten quiet minutes for yourself. Light a candle. Ask the questions. Release the old. Reset your energy. Choose your word.

Your future self will thank you. And you’ll walk into 2026 not weighed down by who you’ve been, but lit up by who you’re becoming.

Because here’s the secret: The strongest power you’ll ever have isn’t in what you do. It’s in who you choose to be.

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UNDERSTANDING *REM SLEEP BEHAVIOR DISORDER:* WHEN DREAMS TURN INTO ACTIONS

BY DR. TAWNIE LOWTHER

REM sleep behavior disorder (RBD) is a neurological sleep condition in which a person physically or vocally acts out their dreams during the rapid eye movement (REM) stage of sleep. Normally, when we dream, the brain temporarily paralyzes most of our muscles, preventing us from moving while the dream is playing out. This muscle paralysis acts like a safety switch. In individuals with RBD, however, this protective mechanism does not work properly. As a result, dream-related movements such as kicking, punching, shouting, talking, or even falling out of bed can occur. Because these actions happen while asleep, people are usually unaware of them until a bed partner, family member, or physician observes the behavior.

RBD falls under a larger group of conditions known as parasomnias—sleep disorders that involve unusual movements, vocalizations, or behaviors that interfere with rest. While parasomnias also include sleepwalking, night terrors, and sleep talking, RBD is unique because it happens specifically during REM sleep, the stage most associated with vivid dreams.

THE ROLE OF REM SLEEP

REM sleep plays a vital role in human health. It is the stage where dreaming is most active and where the brain processes memories, regulates emotions, and restores cognitive function. A typical night's sleep includes several cycles of REM, each becoming longer as the night progresses. The first cycle generally begins about 90 minutes after falling asleep and lasts around 10 minutes. Later cycles can extend to 30–60 minutes, especially in the early morning hours.

For most people, REM sleep is accompanied by muscle atonia, a temporary paralysis that prevents the body from acting out dreams. This mechanism allows us to experience even violent or stressful dreams without physically moving. In RBD, however, this paralysis is absent or incomplete. The brain is active, the dream is vivid, and the body is free to move, creating a dangerous situation where people live out their dreams in real time.

TYPES OF REM SLEEP BEHAVIOR DISORDER

RBD does not present in the same way for everyone. Researchers have identified several categories:

Isolated (Idiopathic) RBD:

This form occurs without an obvious underlying medical condition. Over time, though, idiopathic RBD often signals the future development of a neurodegenerative disorder. Studies have shown that many people eventually develop Parkinson's disease, Lewy body dementia, or multiple system atrophy (MSA). These illnesses are grouped under alpha-synucleinopathies, referring to abnormal deposits of the protein alpha-synuclein in the brain.

Secondary (Symptomatic) RBD

This type arises in connection with another medical issue, such as Type 1 narcolepsy, or may develop in someone who already has a neurodegenerative condition.

Drug-Induced RBD

Certain antidepressants and other medications can trigger dream-enacting behaviors. In some cases, adjusting or discontinuing the medication under medical supervision can reduce or eliminate symptoms.

WHO IS MOST AFFECTED?

RBD is most frequently diagnosed in older adults, with the average onset around age 61. It can occur in younger people, but this is rare. Men are diagnosed much more often than women—about nine times more likely. However, experts suspect this gap may be partly due to underdiagnosis in women, who may present with less dramatic symptoms or be overlooked in clinical settings.

Perhaps the most concerning aspect of RBD is its link to neurodegenerative disease. Studies suggest that up to 97% of people with idiopathic RBD will eventually develop Parkinson's disease, Lewy body dementia, or MSA within 14 years of diagnosis. This makes RBD a potential early warning sign and an important condition to recognize.

Other populations also face elevated risk: around 36% of people with Type 1 narcolepsy have secondary RBD, and about 6% of individuals taking antidepressants develop drug-induced RBD.

HOW COMMON IS REM SLEEP BEHAVIOR DISORDER?

RBD is relatively uncommon compared to other sleep disorders. It affects roughly 1% of the general population and about 2% of people over age 50 in the United States. That said, these numbers may underestimate reality. Because RBD occurs during sleep, many individuals are unaware of their behaviors—especially those who live alone. Even people with partners may not realize they need medical evaluation until injuries occur or their symptoms significantly disrupt sleep. As awareness grows among both the public and healthcare providers, diagnoses are expected to rise.

SYMPTOMS OF REM SLEEP BEHAVIOR DISORDER:

The hallmark of RBD is dream enactment. Symptoms can vary from mild to severe and may include:

- Small muscle twitches or jerking of the arms and legs
- Talking, shouting, or swearing during sleep
- Punching, kicking, or grabbing at the air or a bed partner
- Falling or jumping out of bed.

- Around 80% of people with RBD experience injuries, either to themselves or their partners. Episodes can occur occasionally or several times per night. They tend to be most intense when the dream itself is violent or threatening. Unlike people experiencing night terrors, individuals with RBD can usually be woken easily. Once awake, they are alert and often remember the dream in detail.

It is also important to distinguish RBD from obstructive sleep apnea (OSA), which can mimic similar movements during sleep. In cases of “pseudo-RBD” caused by apnea, treating OSA often resolves the dream-enacting behavior.

CAUSES OF RBD

During normal REM sleep, the brainstem ensures muscle atonia so that dreamers remain safely still. In RBD, this mechanism fails. The exact reasons are still under investigation, but several theories exist:

Idiopathic RBD may stem from dysfunction in the pons, a brainstem structure that regulates REM-related paralysis. Lesions in this area are also associated with Parkinson's, Lewy body dementia, and MSA.

Secondary RBD is often linked to narcolepsy, a condition characterized by a loss of orexin (hypocretin), a neurotransmitter critical for regulating sleep and wakefulness.

Drug-induced RBD may result from imbalances in serotonin and dopamine, two neurotransmitters that play significant roles in REM sleep.

WHY DIAGNOSIS AND TREATMENT MATTER:

RBD is more than an inconvenience. Because the condition often involves physical aggression during sleep, it poses serious safety risks. People may fall out of bed, crash into furniture, or unintentionally harm a partner. Beyond immediate dangers, RBD is often a sign of broader neurological health concerns. Recognizing and diagnosing the disorder early may provide doctors with critical insight into the potential onset of Parkinson's disease or related conditions.

Treatment typically involves a combination of medications—such as clonazepam or melatonin—with environmental safety adjustments. Simple changes, such as removing sharp objects from the bedroom, adding padded bed rails, or creating separate sleeping spaces, can help prevent injuries.

For those with medication-related RBD, adjusting prescriptions under medical guidance may reduce symptoms. Just as important, patients should undergo regular neurological evaluation to monitor for the development of related conditions.

LIVING WITH RBD

Managing RBD requires a balance of medical treatment and lifestyle changes. Families and partners often play a key role in recognizing behaviors and creating a safer sleep environment. With awareness, proper care, and early intervention, many people with RBD are able to reduce episodes and protect themselves from injury while addressing the underlying neurological risks associated with the disorder.



Connect with Dr. Tawnie Lowther:

<https://bestholisticlife.info/SoundSleepServices>





FROM LOW SELF-WORTH TO *Limitless Potential*: MY JOURNEY TO TRANSFORMATION AND EMPOWERMENT

BY NIKKI FRECHETTE WITH EM/POWEREDBYWMN

For years, I lived in a cycle that felt unshakable—drawn to controlling, possessive partners, mistaking their dominance for love and stability. Beneath it all was a deep well of low self-worth and codependency. I didn't realize it at the time, but I was giving away my power in exchange for the illusion of security.

That exchange came at a cost. I lost touch with my own voice, my identity, and my inner compass. In the most toxic of these relationships, I experienced what I now recognize as situational depression—an emotional heaviness brought on by an environment that was constantly chipping away at my confidence.

THE BREAKING POINT

It wasn't a single dramatic moment, but rather a quiet accumulation of painful realizations that led me to change. I had to face the truth: I had been molding myself to fit other people's expectations, and in the process, I was unable to connect with my own worth. That awareness was painful, but it was also the first step toward transformation.

During this time, I was formally diagnosed with "Depression." What I didn't admit to my therapist, however, was the abuse I was experiencing in my relationship. Out of fear, shame, and self-protection, I withheld crucial information that could have provided context. As a result, I received an incomplete diagnosis—and was prescribed anti-depressant medication that did not help me. In fact, it made my situation worse. It felt like putting a Band-Aid over a deep wound. The core issue wasn't being addressed because the real source of my suffering wasn't chemical—it was rooted in my identity, my beliefs, and my fractured sense of self-worth.

That experience taught me a life-changing lesson: healing requires honesty—with ourselves and with those trying to help us. Without that, we're only treating symptoms, not causes.

REWIRING THE MIND-BODY CONNECTION

Once I began confronting the truth of my situation, I turned to holistic practices, not as quick fixes, but as tools to rebuild myself from the inside out.

I realized that our minds and bodies are deeply interconnected. Research shows that our thoughts influence everything from stress levels to immune function. A study in *Frontiers in Psychology* even found that mindfulness, gratitude, and intentional action can reshape neural pathways, fostering resilience.

For me, this meant establishing small, daily rituals: breathwork to calm my nervous system, guided meditation to quiet negative self-talk, body movement to burn out anxiety, and journaling first thing in the morning—before checking my phone, emails, or calls—to release the narratives looping in my head. Many of those narratives stemmed from past relationships, reinforcing the belief that I wasn't enough. By naming them, I could begin to rewrite them.

LEARNING THE ART OF HEALTHY BOUNDARIES

Another turning point came during my Domestic Violence Counselor Advocate certification through The Women's Shelter of Long Beach. Their curriculum didn't just focus on the cycle of abuse; it taught me the art of boundaries—something I had struggled with my entire life.

I learned that boundaries aren't walls; they're agreements that protect your energy and define what is and isn't acceptable. Practicing them gave me the space to grow without

falling back into old patterns. For the first time, I was able to say “no” without guilt, trust that the right people would respect me, and show up from a place of empowerment rather than depletion. **CERTIFICATION AND MINDSET SHIFT**

My journey eventually led me to pursue certification as a Health and Transformational Life Coach through The Health Coach Institute. That program didn’t just give me new tools—it elevated my mindset. I began to understand the science of habit change, the psychology of belief systems, and the importance of aligning identity with action.

For me, the certification was more than a credential. It was proof that I could reclaim my life, build a new foundation, and help others do the same. It taught me how to move beyond survival and create a life that felt aligned, purposeful, and limitless.

HOLISTIC PRACTICES THAT CHANGED EVERYTHING

Through years of practice, I built a toolkit that continues to sustain me:

- **Mindful Movement:** Yoga and Pilates grounded me in my body, released stored tension, and connected me to my core strength
- **Nourishment with Intention:** Choosing whole, nutrient-rich foods became an act of self-respect.
- **Creative Expression:** Mixing music, writing, or tending plants became powerful outlets for joy.
- **Mentorship and Service:** Currently, I serve as Mentoring Director for The Rose Bowl Institute and Community Director for EM/POWEREDbyWMN. Guiding others keeps me rooted in purpose.

FROM SURVIVING TO THRIVING

Today, I am an empowered, certified Transformational Mind-Body Business Coach, an Amazon Best-Selling Co-Author of *Women Who Lead—Unleash Your Potential*, and—most importantly—a woman who knows her worth.

My work is fueled by the belief that healing isn’t linear; it’s a series of intentional choices. By integrating mind-body practices, honoring my boundaries, and surrounding myself with supportive communities, I’ve rewritten my story. My past no longer defines me; it informs my mission to help others step into their power.

If you’re feeling stuck, weighed down, or misdiagnosed, please know this: you are not broken. You are not too far gone. Healing begins with truth, grows with intention, and flourishes when you give yourself permission to take up space.

My hope is that my story reminds you: you can reclaim your voice, honor your worth, and create a life that feels authentically your own.

Connect with Nikki:

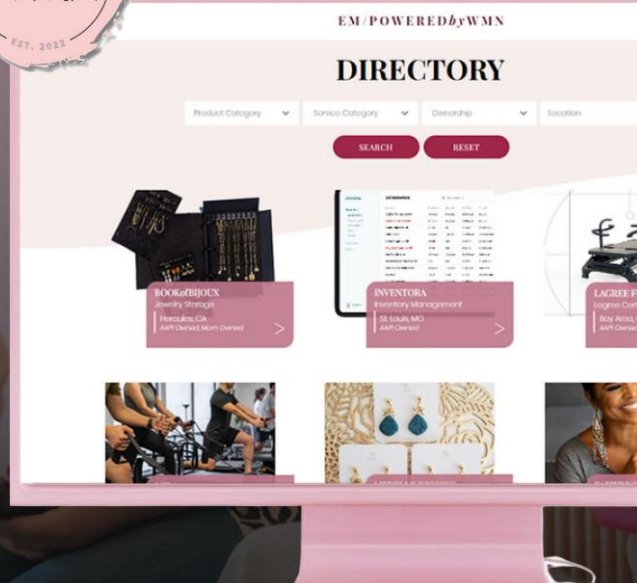
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MORE THAN *Just Thankful:* THE SCIENCE AND SOUL OF GRATITUDE

BY VIRGINIA OMAN

A DAILY PRACTICE THAT CHANGES EVERYTHING

Most of us have heard how helpful gratitude is in aiding us to feel better. Yet how many of us actually take action and practice it on a regular, daily basis? Knowledge without application is pretty much useless. Gratitude, when lived, can become one of the most powerful tools for healing, happiness, and fulfillment.

THE SCIENCE OF VIBRATION AND GRATITUDE

Science has proven that everything on earth vibrates—including each of us. The higher the frequency we vibrate at, the lighter and happier we feel. States such as love, joy, and bliss resonate at the highest frequencies. Gratitude is one of the fastest ways to raise our vibration, instantly lifting our emotional state. That's why, when you pause to truly feel grateful, you notice yourself shift—your body softens, your heart expands, and the weight of worry feels much lighter.

LIVING IN A CONSTANT STATE OF GRATITUDE

For me, I've been practicing this for so long that it has become a habit. Gratitude has become more than an occasional practice—it is my natural state of mind. Each morning when I go out for my walk, I start by stepping outside and look up at the sky. I see stars, the moon, sometimes clouds, sometimes the sunrise. Each one of those, even the rain, is beautiful. As I'm looking up, I stretch my arms wide and say "thank you" out loud. This simple ritual sets the tone for my day and aligns me with joy before I've had my first cup of coffee. Friends often ask me what it's like to live in a state of continual gratitude. For some, it sounds "too good to be true" or even unrealistic, as though I'm living like Pollyanna. But gratitude is not about ignoring pain or pretending everything is perfect. It's about choosing to see the beauty and meaning in life, even when it's difficult.

THE POLLYANNA ANALOGY—AND WHY IT MATTERS

Pollyanna, the beloved 1913 novel by Eleanor H. Porter (later adapted into the award-winning 1960 film starring Hayley Mills), tells the story of a girl who chooses to focus

on the good despite hardships. Critics often dismiss her character as naïve, saying it's easy to stay upbeat when life is going well. But the deeper truth is revealed when Pollyanna suffers a devastating accident that leaves her paralyzed. Even in her pain, she finds gratitude and beauty. That resilience is the true power of gratitude—it allows us to rise above suffering and shift into hope.

CULTIVATING GRATITUDE AS A HABIT

I haven't always lived this way. It took years of conscious practice to make gratitude a natural habit. As a licensed Mental Health Therapist for over 34 years, I've guided countless clients struggling with depression and anxiety. Again and again, through the process of showing them how to cultivate gratitude, I've witnessed how it transforms their outlook and lifts their quality of life. What begins as a small daily practice often grows into a state of mind that feels natural, effortless, and life-giving. They all remark that they never want to go back to their old way of perceiving the world.

A GRATITUDE PRACTICE TO TRY

One of my favorite methods is the Gratitude Journal Exercise, which I often introduce to clients. Here's how you can begin:

Choose Your Journal: Pick a notebook that feels special to you. It can be as simple as a spiral student notebook, but let the color of the cover reflect something meaningful about gratitude.

Create Space: Set aside 30 minutes to be in a private space where you will be undisturbed. **IMPORTANT:** Turn off your phone. Best yet, turn it off and leave it outside the door.

List Freely: Begin by listing everything you are grateful for. Don't worry about full sentences—just list. It doesn't have to be in any particular order, so just let whatever comes up for gratitude be something you immediately write down. When you feel you've exhausted your list, ask: "What could I be grateful for if I wanted to be?" Many people find they add to their list after they have asked themselves this question, as it opens new pathways of awareness.

Reflect: Look over your list. Notice how your heart and mind respond. Most people are astonished at how much they have to be grateful for—and how immediately their mood lifts.

Daily Three: Starting the next day, write down three new things you're grateful for each evening. These can be simple—a butterfly, a kind smile, the warmth of sunlight. This daily practice trains your mind to look for moments of gratitude throughout the day.

DEEPENING THE PRACTICE

Here's how you can really transform. (You might choose to do this on a different day, as it requires more time.)

If you want to deepen the impact of the gratitude exercise, sit with your journal and spend 10–20 minutes focusing on one item from your list. Close your eyes, breathe deeply, and envision all the ways that item enriches your life. Feel it. See it. Fully experience the gratitude in your heart and say “thank you” out loud. Hold that emotion for ten full seconds. Then move on to another item.

I'll never forget when I chose water from my list. As I meditated on it, all its magical gifts began flooding my awareness: the soothing comfort of a warm bath, the blue of the ocean, the joy of gliding through a swimming pool in the summer sun, the nourishing rain feeding the earth, the sound of rainfall calming my spirit,... the examples kept coming. By the time I finished, tears filled my eyes as I whispered again and again, “thank you, water, thank you.”

GRATITUDE AS A WAY OF LIFE

Gratitude has become the bookends of my day—from the moment I open my eyes to the last thought before sleep. It is a cultivated state of mind that I would never trade for anything. And here's the truth: you have access to this same state, right now, at every moment. Gratitude doesn't eliminate life's challenges, but it transforms how you experience them. It anchors you in joy, lightens your spirit, raises your frequency, and can open the doorway to lasting fulfillment.

A state of happiness that is free, holistic, has no negative side effects, and is instantly available to you 24/7. You can't get much better than that!

Virginia Oman LCMHC is a Licensed Mental HEALTH Therapist and Mindset Coach. If you have an interest in increasing the level of fulfillment in your life, she welcomes you to contact her for a free consultation. She works virtually with people from all over the world.

<https://bestholisticlife.info/VirginiaOmanCoaching>



Why is Cinnamon Amazing?

Are you looking for a way to help keep your family looking and feeling their best this season? Well, look no further! Cinnamon oil is packed full of excellent health benefits and is also a great way to make your house smell like Christmas all year!

IMMUNITY

Cinnamon is a natural antibacterial, antifungal, antimicrobial, antiparasitic, and antiviral agent. This means that it helps kill off any unwanted visitors when used. Cinnamon has been used in medical prescriptions to keep individuals healthy. It has even been used as a tranquilizer and is most commonly combined with clove and orange to keep illness at bay. Cinnamon is great for helping support your immune system at home.

DIGESTION

Because of cinnamon's natural ability to improve circulation and its light antispasmodic properties, it is a great way to aid your digestion. With the holidays here, we all tend to overindulge in holiday treats. Cinnamon is a great way to help restore and balance your blood sugar levels and promote your metabolism—making this spice a must for every home. Historically, cinnamon was taken internally as a tonic to help aid digestion and soothe common stomach complaints.

MOOD

Because cinnamon is naturally amazing for promoting blood flow and circulation, it has also been used as a sexual stimulant. Cinnamon is a hot oil that naturally increases in temperature when applied topically. This is why diluting and washing your hands after use is important to avoid getting any into your eyes. Cinnamon is also a natural antidepressant, making it a must-have to help keep you happy and healthy all year.





CINNAMON VANILLA SUGAR SCRUB

Ingredients:

1 cup granulated sugar
 1/2 cup coconut oil
 1 teaspoon ground cinnamon
 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
 5-10 drops cinnamon essential oil
 Clean, dry jars or containers for storage

Directions:

In the mixing bowl, add the granulated sugar and melted coconut oil. Stir well to combine, ensuring that all the sugar is coated with the oil. Add the ground cinnamon and vanilla extract to the sugar and coconut oil mixture. Stir well to evenly distribute the spices and flavor throughout the scrub. Add 5-10 drops of cinnamon essential oil to the scrub mixture, depending on your preference for scent intensity. Stir well to incorporate the essential oil into the scrub. If the scrub is too dry, you can add a little more melted coconut oil until you reach your desired consistency. If it's too wet, add more sugar. Carefully transfer the Cinnamon Vanilla Sugar Scrub into clean, dry jars or containers. Make sure the containers are clean and dry before adding the scrub.



CINNAMON INFUSED BODY BUTTER

Ingredients:

1/2 cup shea butter
 1/4 cup coconut oil
 1/4 cup almond oil
 10 drops cinnamon essential oil
 5 drops vanilla essential oil

Directions:

In the double boiler or microwave-safe bowl, melt the shea butter and coconut oil together until fully liquefied. Stir well to combine. Once melted, remove the mixture from heat and add the almond oil. Stir well to combine. Allow the mixture to cool slightly, then add 10 drops of cinnamon essential oil and 5 drops of vanilla essential oil. Stir well to evenly distribute the essential oils throughout the mixture. Place the mixture in the refrigerator for about 30 minutes to an hour, or until it begins to solidify around the edges but is still somewhat soft in the center. Remove the mixture from the refrigerator and use a hand mixer or stand mixer to whip it until light and fluffy. This may take several minutes. Carefully transfer the whipped body butter into clean, dry jars or containers. Make sure the containers are clean and dry before adding the body butter.

WHY SELF- LOVE IS THE ONLY PATH TO FREEDOM FROM A NARCISSIST?

RECLAIMING YOUR INNER POW-
ER AND IDENTITY TO BREAK FREE
FROM A TOXIC RELATIONSHIP

BY KATARZYNA 'KASIA' DODD





HOW THE GAME BEGINS

It often begins with a sense of recognition—that uncanny, exhilarating feeling that someone finally sees you in a way others haven’t. It feels intimate, familiar, and almost sacred. You open up quickly, caught in a current of emotional intensity that seems to move faster than reason. This isn’t what we’re taught to fear. There are no obvious red flags, no controlling demands. The covert narcissist listens closely, reflects your values, mirrors your wounds, and makes you feel deeply known.

But what you’re experiencing isn’t true connection. It’s strategic familiarity. You’re not being seen—you’re being studied. And the more you lean in, the more invested you become—not just in him, but in how you feel in his presence. The spell isn’t really about him. It’s about what gets activated in you: the hope of being chosen, the feeling of finally being met.

By the time you sense something is off, your heart is already deeply attached to what this connection seemed to promise.

WHY WE STAY EVEN WHEN WE KNOW

Once the dynamic begins to shift, it doesn’t collapse all at once. The warmth flickers, then fades. You notice subtle contradictions, moments of coldness you can’t explain—but they’re easy to dismiss. He’s just stressed, you tell yourself. Everyone has bad days. Without realizing it, you begin to compensate—softening

your words, avoiding conflict, and adjusting your tone. Over time, you question your own reactions more than his behavior.

And this is the real trap: not his manipulation, but your growing self-doubt. You remember how good it felt in the beginning and try to get back there — by giving more, staying longer, hoping harder. But what you’re actually doing is turning away from yourself. You stop asking what feels true, and start asking what might make it work.

From the outside, it may not look like control. But inside, something essential begins to fade.

THE MOMENT EVERYTHING QUIETLY BEGINS TO SHIFT

Eventually, something shifts. It’s rarely dramatic. You feel more at ease when he’s not around. You catch yourself pretending to be fine, but it’s getting harder to maintain. You stop defending him in your mind and begin simply observing. There’s no single moment of clarity—just a quiet knowing that grows over time. You begin to see that this relationship isn’t making you feel loved. It’s making you feel small and disconnected from yourself.

You might not leave yet. But something inside you has changed, and that part of you can’t be silenced anymore. You start to want something different—not from him, but for yourself. And that quiet shift, that refusal to keep shrinking, is where freedom truly begins.

WHY SELF-LOVE IS THE ONLY PATH TO FREEDOM FROM A NARCISSIST

What finally sets you free is not clarity about the narcissist, but clarity about yourself. Not the moment you fully understand his dysfunction, but the moment you realize you're done living in response to it.

Freedom begins when the search for validation turns inward—not as a last resort, but as a return to something essential you had forgotten: your own worth. This is where self-love becomes not just helpful, but necessary.

In the wake of a narcissistic relationship, there's often a temptation to rebuild through strategy—with stronger boundaries, better red flags, and sharper insights. And while all of that matters, none of it will protect you if the deeper wound remains unhealed: the part of you that still believes you have to earn love by abandoning yourself.

This is why self-love is the only way out. Because without it, you'll keep attracting situations that replay the same emotional script. You'll leave the person but keep the pattern. You'll seek connection, but at the cost of self-erasure.

Self-love interrupts that pattern. It calls you back to your body—to what you feel, what you need, and what you know. It teaches you to stop negotiating your instincts away in order to be accepted. It allows you to witness your longing without shame and to stop giving parts of yourself to people who only love selectively. And it changes everything—not all at once, but steadily.

At first, it might look like getting quiet before saying yes. It might mean telling the truth when you're afraid to lose someone. It might mean doing nothing at all—just sitting with yourself without trying to fix who you are.

Over time, self-love becomes the lens through which you begin to see the entire relationship differently. You

recognize that what you called love was often a performance. And what felt like intimacy was sometimes manipulation. That what you were fighting to preserve was never mutual—because your wellbeing was never truly part of the equation.

And this recognition is painful, but it's also liberating. Because once you see it clearly, you can finally stop trying to make it work. ***You can stop trying to be chosen and start choosing yourself.*** When you begin to love yourself—not in theory, but in practice—the narcissist's power dissolves. Not because you fight harder, but because you are no longer available for relationships that require you to disappear.

This is what real freedom looks like. It's not a victory over him. It's a return to wholeness within you.

You don't need closure from someone who was never open. You don't need apologies that will never come. You don't need to understand his psychology to reclaim your life. You only need to come home—again and again—to your own love. And from there, everything changes.

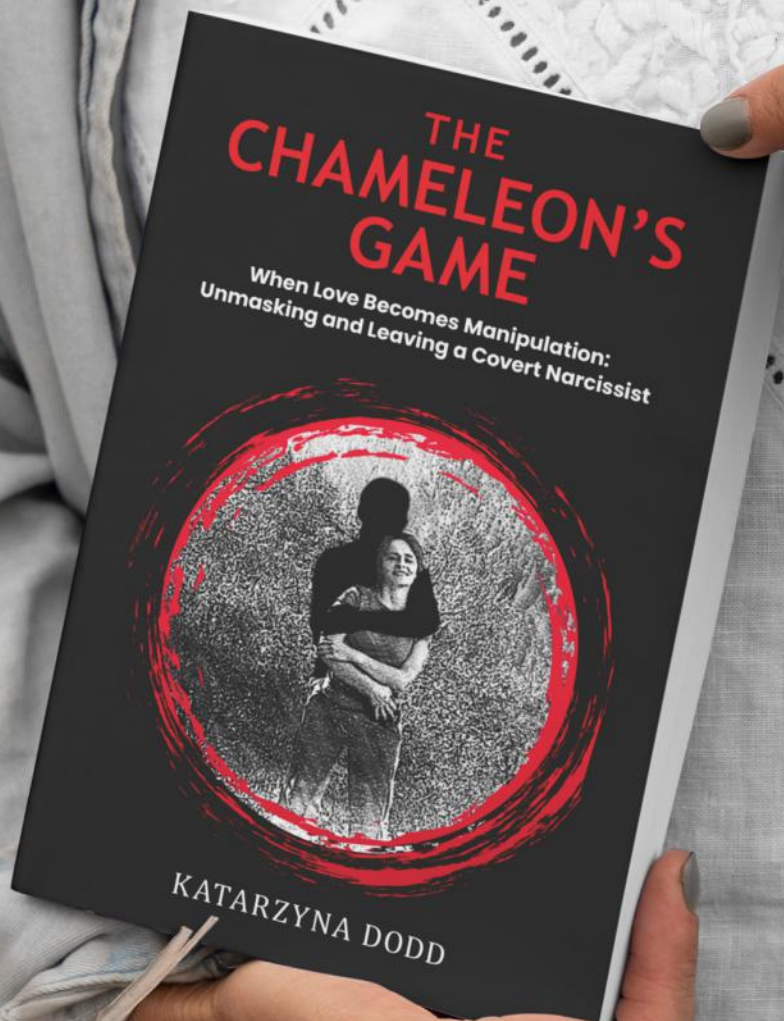
A PERSONAL JOURNEY YOU'RE NOT ALONE IN

If this article resonates with you, you might want to explore my new book, *The Chameleon's Game*, which has just been released. It's a deeply personal—and painfully honest—account of my experience with covert narcissism and the inner journey that led me back to myself.

You'll find reflections, patterns, and insights that many women have lived but couldn't name—until now. I wrote it so that no one has to feel alone in this kind of relationship again.

Connect with Katarzyna 'Kasia' Dodd:

<https://bestholisticlife.info/KatarzynaKasiaDodd>



GRAB YOUR COPY!



Release with Love™:

THE ART OF DETACHMENT WITH COMPASSION

BY DAMESHA CRAIG

We often think of letting go as slamming a door—walking away in anger, resentment, or bitterness. But there is another way.

Release with Love™ is my coined approach to the art of detachment—choosing to let go not in anger, but in love, compassion, and peace.

Neuroscience backs this up:

Holding onto anger activates the amygdala, locking the brain into a stress response.

Acts of compassion, however, calm the nervous system, boost serotonin, and strengthen emotional resilience.

When we release in love, we're not excusing harmful behavior or erasing what happened. We're rewiring the brain to respond with empathy rather than reactivity. We reclaim our energy and move forward lighter, healthier, and more at peace with ourselves and others.

THE CONTRAST: ANGER VS. LOVE

Holding On or Letting Go in Anger

Imagine ending a relationship after months of feeling unseen.

Your mind replays every hurtful moment.

You scroll through their social media, dissecting what went wrong, resentment burning like wildfire.

Your body joins the battle—cortisol rises, thoughts race, and tension settles in your shoulders.

Even though they're gone, your nervous system is still stuck in fight-or-flight.

Holding On in Anger

- Mind replays every hurtful moment like a loop.
- Scrolling social media, dissecting what went wrong
- Resentment builds, fueling more pain.

- Body reacts: cortisol spikes, thoughts race, tension in the shoulders.
- Nervous system stays trapped in fight-or-flight—even after they're gone.

Letting Go in Anger

- Walking away but still replaying the pain
- Cutting ties with resentment as the anchor,
- Saying "I'm done" while secretly keeping score
- Nervous system stays activated—fight-or-flight lingers.

Freedom is partial because bitterness still holds power.

RELEASE WITH LOVE™

Now imagine a different choice.

You pause. You acknowledge what was good, even if it's just the lessons learned. You feel the sadness, but don't feed the anger. You take your power back. You consciously say:

"I wish you well, and I free myself from this chapter."

This shift rewires the brain. Instead of the amygdala fueling reactivity, the prefrontal cortex steps in—where clarity, emotional regulation, and long-term peace live.

Neuroscience shows that when we consciously reframe our emotional response, activity in the amygdala decreases while the prefrontal cortex strengthens its regulatory role. In fact, one study from UCLA found that simply labeling emotions ("I feel angry," "I feel sad") reduces amygdala activity and increases prefrontal activation, helping the brain process emotions more calmly.

It's not about excusing them. It's about choosing freedom for yourself.

And your body joins the shift: your breath slows, your shoulders soften, and your chest feels lighter. Release



becomes not just a thought, but a felt experience.

A simple practice: write their name on paper, speak your release statement out loud, then tear the page or place it somewhere out of sight. This symbolic act signals to your brain and body that you are done carrying the weight.

MY STORY: FROM SILENT ANGER TO RELEASE

We'd been circling the same arguments for months—every word a tug-of-war neither of us wanted to drop.

When it finally ended, I was furious.

Furious at the wasted time.

Furious at the sharp words. Furious that I had given so much, only to be given so little in return, and feeling so depleted.

I wore that silent anger like armor, believing it made me strong. But in truth, it was eating me alive—tight shoulders, restless nights, and a mind stuck on repeat.

One day, I tried something different. I sat quietly, closed my eyes, and instead of replaying what hurt, I replayed what I had learned. The laughter. The growth. Even the lessons from the pain.

And then I whispered:

“I release you with love.”

Not because they deserved it.

But because I did.

In that moment, something shifted. My breath softened. My jaw unclenched. My heart felt lighter.

Neuroscience confirms what my body already knew: what we aren't changing, we are choosing. Choosing compassion activates the parts of the brain linked to empathy and problem-solving, enabling us to create lasting peace.

WHY RELEASE WITH LOVE™ MATTERS

Release with Love™ isn't about forgetting.

It isn't about pretending it didn't hurt.

It's about creating peace in your nervous system so you can walk forward untangled, unburdened, and free. Just like a gardener pruning away the dead leaves, we honor what once was—because it nourished us then. But by releasing it, we make space for new growth, deeper roots, and brighter blooms.

A QUESTION FOR YOU

Which version of yourself, or which chapter of your story, are you ready to Release with Love™ so your true self can finally bloom?

Connect with Damesha: <https://linktr.ee/dameshacraig>

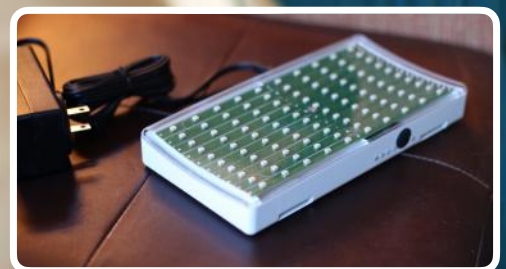
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*Dawna
Campbell*

“Your nervous system is your sales funnel. Your body is the brand.”

Sit with that—as a truth your body already knows.

When modern business worships the grind—more content, more hustle, more output—women are waking up to a deeper truth. The most successful feminine CEOs aren’t just marketing geniuses or productivity machines; they’re magnetic leaders who understand how to work with their bodies, not against them. Maybe you’ve felt it too—the pull to do more, be more, prove more—when all your body wanted was permission to feel.

Sensual intelligence is the edge. The frequency that turns your presence into power—and your intuition into income.

Sensuality here is rooted in somatic sovereignty, a power that begins from within. When a woman is fully present in her body, she becomes magnetic. No landing page can compete with her lived presence, and her resonance draws in the right people, opportunities, and wealth.

Rather than competing for attention, the feminine economy calls us to embody presence so profoundly that the world naturally responds. To feel. To attune. This is the business of embodiment. And it’s time you remembered the body is not a liability. It’s your most potent asset.

SENSUAL INTELLIGENCE:

THE SECRET WEAPON OF THE FEMININE CEO

BY DAWNA CAMPBELL

WHAT SENSUAL INTELLIGENCE REALLY IS (AND ISN'T)

Sensual intelligence is integrated knowing. It comes not from striving but from tuning in—from a felt awareness of the world around and within you. It's what allows you to walk into a room and shift the energy without saying a word. True power emerges and radiates from inner stillness.

To be clear: sensuality is not the same as sexuality. Sensuality is your capacity to feel—through touch, scent, sound, sight, and taste. It's about experiencing life fully, not just thinking about it. It's how you access your intuition, express your truth, and anchor your power.

In business, sensual intelligence looks like reading the room without needing data. It's how you know when to launch, when to rest, and when to pivot—because your body is in conversation with your desires. This intelligence holds both elegance and edge. It is a vital and grounded tool for intuitive leadership. When you cultivate sensual intelligence, you start magnetizing aligned success and stop chasing validation.

TURN ON YOUR SENSES, TURN ON YOUR BUSINESS

Your senses are more than biological tools—they're spiritual technologies. When a woman activates her senses, she activates her genius. Sensual intelligence lives at the intersection of pleasure and power. When your senses are fully online, so are your intuition, clarity, and command.

Think of your senses as the gateway to your essence. And essence? That's what makes you magnetic in a meeting, compelling on camera, and unforgettable in conversation. A woman who feels deeply doesn't just notice more—she knows more. She sees what others miss. She hears what isn't said. She responds with precision, not from fear, but from truth.

When your senses are dulled—by overstimulation, burnout, or disconnection—your brilliance dims too. The feminine CEO leads from depth, where action is guided by intuition, not pressure. She turns toward sensation, not away from it. She lets her body lead.

Sensuality fuels innovation. Your best ideas don't arrive through force—they rise while dancing, bathing, walking, and breathing. Aliveness births clarity. And the more you honor your aliveness, the more your business begins to mirror it—vibrant, magnetic, and alive.

Want your brand to resonate more? Start by feeling more. Your senses are the original algorithm—and they never lie.

EMBODIMENT PRACTICES

That Create Irresistible Resonance Embodiment is the core foundation. It's the bridge between who you say you are and what your nervous system actually believes. It's how your inner alignment shapes how your business moves in the world.

When your energy aligns with your essence, success becomes a natural extension of your frequency. This is how you create resonance—not just relevance.

Start with the breath. It's the fastest way to bring the body back online. Deep, intentional breathing shifts you out of hustle and into harmony. Before a sales call, a launch, or a team meeting—breathe. Let your body lead the energy.

Next, movement. Sensual movement—like dancing, stretching, or swaying—helps release stagnation and awaken vitality. This is permission to feel, to expand, and to take up space. The more you move from truth, the more your presence speaks before you ever say a word.

Then, stillness. Create space for silence, beauty, and pleasure. Light a candle, sip tea slowly, and anoint yourself with oil. These aren't indulgences—they're practices of remembrance. When you treat your body as sacred, your business becomes an altar, not a battleground.

The more you live your truth, the less you need to explain it.

EMBODY THE BRAND, BECOME THE MAGNET

Sensual intelligence is timely. Sensual intelligence is timeless. Sensual intelligence is truth remembered through the body. It is a rhythm that never stopped—only got quiet beneath the noise. Now, it rises again. Not new, but newly noticed. Not invented, but remembered. Not taught, but felt.

You don't need another funnel, another script, or another shiny formula. You need you—fully turned on, fully attuned, fully present. Because when you are deeply connected to your body, you don't just deliver a message—you become one. Your brand isn't just what you post. It's what people feel when they're in your presence.

This is about becoming real.

The feminine CEO awakens attention.

That's what makes her unforgettable.

Connect with Dawna Campbell: <https://bestholisticlife.info/DawnaCampbell>



A warm, inviting kitchen scene decorated for the holidays. In the foreground, a thick wooden countertop is adorned with a lush green pine garland and several large, natural pinecones. In the background, white cabinetry is visible, with a festive garland of lights and greenery draped over the top. A small Christmas tree is partially visible behind the cabinets. The overall atmosphere is cozy and festive.

UNLOCKING NATURE'S PHARMACY:

HEALING FOODS FOR
THE HOLIDAY



Gluten-Free



Vegan



Dairy-Free

Best Homemade
Pasta





JOLLY MORNING GLOW BOWL



Serves 2

Ingredients:

- 1 frozen banana
- 1/2 cup frozen cranberries
- 1/2 cup frozen cauliflower (trust me!)
- 1 scoop vanilla plant-based protein
- 1/2 tsp cinnamon
- 1/4 tsp nutmeg
- 1/2 cup almond milk (or more as needed)

Toppings:

- pomegranate seeds,
- chopped pistachios,
- coconut flakes,
- granola

Directions:

Blend all ingredients (except toppings) until smooth and creamy. Add more almond milk for desired consistency.

Pour into bowls and sprinkle on toppings.

Serve immediately with a sprinkle of joy and a spoonful of sparkle.

SANTA'S SNEAKY SUPERFOOD COOKIES



Serves 12

Ingredients:

1 cup almond flour
1/4 cup coconut sugar
1/2 tsp baking soda
1/4 cup melted coconut oil
1 flax egg (1 tbsp flaxseed + 3 tbsp water)
1/4 cup dark chocolate chips
2 tbsp hemp seeds
1/2 tsp vanilla extract
Pinch sea salt

Directions:

Preheat oven to 350°F (175°C). Line baking sheet with parchment.
Mix flax egg and let sit 5 min. Combine all dry ingredients.
Stir in wet ingredients and flax egg.
Fold in chocolate chips and hemp seeds.
Scoop and flatten cookies. Bake 10–12 minutes.
Let cool, then taste the naughty-but-nice vibe.





MERRY BERRY ANTIOXIDANT SMOOTHIE



Serves 2

Ingredients:

1 cup frozen mixed berries
1/2 banana
1 handful spinach
1 tbsp chia seeds
1 tbsp almond butter
1/2 tsp cinnamon
1 cup unsweetened oat milk
Optional: 1/2 scoop vanilla protein

Directions:

Blend until creamy.
Pour into glasses and top with cinnamon or cacao nibs.
Serve with a candy cane straw and sip your way to sparkle.



BERRY GOOD CHICKEN: ARUGULA SALAD WITH A SWEET SURPRISE



Serves 4

Ingredients:

- 6 cups mixed greens (arugula + spinach)
- 1/2 cup dried figs, chopped
- 1/3 cup toasted walnuts
- 1/4 cup crumbled dairy-free feta (or regular if preferred)
- 1 small red onion, thinly sliced

Dressing:

- 2 tbsp olive oil
- 1 tbsp balsamic vinegar
- 1 tsp maple syrup
- 1/2 tsp Dijon, salt & pepper

Directions:

- Toss greens with figs, walnuts, onion, and feta.
- Whisk dressing and drizzle over top.
- Serve chilled—like a sleigh ride for your taste buds.





NORTH POLE NO-BAKE BROWNIES



Serves 4

Ingredients:

- 1 cup Medjool dates (pitted & soaked)
- 1/2 cup raw almonds
- 1/2 cup walnuts
- 1/4 cup cacao powder
- Pinch sea salt
- 1/4 tsp peppermint extract

Directions:

- Pulse nuts in a food processor.
- Add dates, cacao, salt, peppermint, and blend until sticky.
- Press into a lined pan and chill for 1 hour.
- Slice and serve with crushed candy canes (optional).



GINGERBREAD GLOW SMOOTHIE BOWL

Serves 2

Ingredients:

- 1 frozen banana
- 1/2 avocado
- 1 scoop vanilla protein powder
- 1/2 tsp ginger
- 1/2 tsp cinnamon
- 1/8 tsp cloves
- 1/2 cup almond milk

Toppings:

- pecans
- chia seeds
- sliced pear

Directions:

- Blend everything until thick.
- Pour into bowls, decorate with toppings.
- It's gingerbread house vibes in a bowl.









MISTLETOE MUSHROOM RISOTTO



Serves 4

Ingredients:

11 tbsp olive oil
1 small onion, finely chopped
2 cloves garlic, minced
1 cup arborio rice
1/2 cup dry white wine (or veggie broth)
4 cups low-sodium vegetable broth
1 cup mushrooms (shiitake, baby bella), chopped
1/4 cup nutritional yeast or vegan parmesan
Salt, pepper, thyme

Directions:

Sauté onion, garlic, and mushrooms.
Stir in rice. Add wine, cook until absorbed.
Slowly add broth, 1/2 cup at a time, stirring until creamy.
Stir in nutritional yeast and thyme.
Serve warm, with a sprinkle of magic.



Judy Hahn
RIMAN
INDEPENDENT DISTRIBUTOR

WHAT IF *EVERYTHING* YOU THOUGHT ABOUT *SKINCARE* IS WRONG? WHY THE PROBLEM ISN'T YOUR AGE—IT'S YOUR APPROACH

BY JUDY HAHN

Let's get this out of the way: aging is not your enemy. Neither is your skin. But somewhere along the way, we were taught that the only way to “fight” aging was to wage war against our own face—to strip, scrub, inject, or mask the very thing that's trying to protect us.

As a former Functional Wellness Coach, I've spent years helping people tune into the wisdom of their bodies. And I've come to realize that the same is true for our skin. Yet most skincare routines—and the billion-dollar beauty industry that promotes them—are built on fear, misinformation, and a fundamental misunderstanding of how skin actually works.

So let's have a bold conversation. Because the truth is, much of what we've been taught about skincare is flat-out wrong.

Myth #1: “You have to know your skin type to choose the right products.”

How many times have you been told you have “dry,” “oily,” “sensitive,” or “combination” skin — as if it's a fixed identity, like a zodiac sign?

Here's what I've learned: your skin isn't a static type. It's a dynamic organ that's always changing — based on your hormones, stress levels, environment, and even the season. What your skin needs in winter isn't the same as what it needs in summer. What it needs at 30 is different from what it needs at 60.

Most products are marketed by skin type to create the illusion of personalization—but what they're actually doing is encouraging you to treat symptoms, not support function.

When I started using Riman's Signature Ritual—which focuses on hydration, nourishment, and barrier repair for all skin—I realized that I didn't need to “fight” my skin type. I just needed to support my skin's biology. And guess what? My dryness disappeared, and my sensitivity faded. My skin simply came back into balance.

Myth #2: “If it tingles or tightens, it's working.”

We've been conditioned to believe that if a product stings, burns, or makes our skin feel tight, it must be doing something good.

But in truth, that “tingling” sensation is often a sign of barrier damage. The burning? A red flag that your skin's acid mantle—its natural protective layer—is under attack.





This kind of chronic irritation leads to premature aging, inflammation, and even conditions like rosacea or perioral dermatitis (which, by the way, I've personally experienced).

Real skincare should never punish your skin. It should nourish, calm, and fortify. When I switched to Riman's products—especially the Moisturizing Oil Cleanser and the layering system in the ICD Ritual—my skin felt comforted from day one. Not tingly. Not tight. Just happy.

Myth #3: "You need harsh actives or injections to look younger."

Retinols. Acids. Lasers. Fillers. Botox.

These are the tools most often presented to us when we want to "reverse aging." But they come with baggage—redness, peeling, sun sensitivity, downtime, and for many, long-term health concerns.

There's a quiet revolution happening in skincare—one that emphasizes long-term barrier repair, hydration, and cell renewal using non-toxic, bioavailable ingredients. Riman is at the forefront of this shift. Their Korean skincare line is rooted in centuries-old wisdom, combined with cutting-edge science.

And it works. I saw noticeable changes in my skin—smoother texture, more even tone, fewer fine lines—without a single needle or chemical peel. That's real anti-aging, and it's sustainable.

Myth #4: "The more expensive, the better."

You've probably seen \$300 jars of cream promising miracles. But price doesn't always equal performance—especially if you're paying for fancy packaging, not proven ingredients.

What matters more is formulation integrity—how the ingredients are sourced, preserved, and delivered to the skin. Riman's formulations are not only clean but also clinically effective. Their pricing is fair, especially when you consider the quality and the fact that you need less product because it's so concentrated.

More is not more. Better is better.

Myth #5: "Healthy skin comes from clean eating alone."

As someone who has always emphasized the importance of gut health and nutrition, let me be the first to say: yes, what you eat matters. However, that's not enough on its own.

Skin is an organ—and like every organ, it needs internal and external support. You wouldn't expect your heart to thrive on food alone. You'd

give it exercise, stress relief, and medical support if needed. Your skin is no different. Clean, nourishing skincare acts like topical nutrition. It hydrates your cells, protects your microbiome, and supports your immune response—all of which matter for healthy aging.

That's why I don't just recommend Riman's line—I live by it. It's an extension of the same principles I've taught in functional wellness: support the system, and the symptoms take care of themselves.

A New Way Forward—and the Gift of Great Skin

Here's the truth: your skin is not broken. It's not "too old" or "too sensitive" or "too complicated." It's simply been misunderstood.

I have seen it time and time again since working with Riman... Once my clients stopped trying to force their skin into submission—and instead, began supporting it with products that honor how it works—everything changed. Not only did they feel confident again, but they also felt confident in their skin. Not because they were perfect, but because their skin finally felt aligned with who they really are.

If you've ever felt overwhelmed by skincare, I invite you to simplify. Let's talk about your skin goals, your lifestyle, and what would feel manageable for you right now.

And since we're in the holiday gift-giving season, let me share one of my favorite ideas: the Expert RIMAN Ritual Experience Kit (now the Signature Riman Ritual). It includes deluxe mini sizes of the full routine, making it the perfect stocking stuffer or self-care starter set. It's luxurious, travel-ready, and a beautiful way to experience the Riman difference.

Want to really pamper her—or yourself? Add in the Moisturizing Oil Cleanser and the Foaming Snow Enzyme Cleanser—my two personal must-haves for gentle, glowing skin. It's a thoughtful gift that says, "I see your beauty, and I want to support it."

And if you're someone who wants to go the extra-extra mile and truly commit to a transformation—then yes, the full-size Signature Riman Ritual is a gift that will keep on giving long after the holidays are over. (not just the results, but the products last for months)

Reach out to me personally—I'd be happy to help you choose the right place to start your own skin renewal journey.

Because great skin isn't about trends, it's about truth.

Connect with Judy Hahn: <https://bestholisticlife.info/JudyHahn>



FROM BLUE ZONES TO BALANCED HORMONES:

RECLAIMING WOMEN'S
HEALTH THROUGH
NATURE'S BLUEPRINT

BY DR. SANGEETA PATI

There are places in the world known as the blue zones, where people live for over 100 years, exist in a healthy, productive state, and are free of chronic disease. Here, women transition through menopause gracefully, without major symptoms or synthetic hormone use. In contrast, many women in the United States experience significant symptoms from their thirties to their sixties.

So what increases longevity in these blue zones? Is it the connection to the elements of nature? Or the overall sentiment of having a joyful purpose, connected to community and tribe? What about the balanced life that rarely requires the nervous system to burn through tons of adrenal and thyroid hormones, thus sparing the ovaries from being depleted? Is it their nutrition?

The truth is, it's a bit of everything. If you experience relentless menopause symptoms, you're not alone. Blue zone lifestyles can be incorporated no matter where you live. They offer valuable lessons that can help us reclaim our health and feel our best at any age.

For example, nature is physically healing.

- The morning sun triggers the cortisol-awakening response, which is vital for adrenal and ovarian hormone production and daily energy.
- Grounding with the earth regulates cortisol rhythms.
- Structured water impacts the endocrine system differently from tap water.
- Slower breathing and a less hectic pace, inspired by the tranquility of blue zones, enhance oxygen delivery.
- In these communities, a life driven by joyful purpose creates a "joyfield" that nurtures every cell in the body.

In the United States, we spend more than other countries, yet we continually rank lower in health indices and life expectancy. In contrast to blue zones, our modern lifestyle keeps our nervous systems in constant activity and in a state of chronic stress responses, like fight or flight. With constant nervous system activity, we burn through our fuel tank of key nutrients and other hormones, like progesterone and magnesium. This depletion starts as early as our teens with progesterone deficiency, leading to symptoms like anxiety, irritability, panic attacks, sleep issues, PMS, heavy bleeding, and mood swings.

However, this story and purpose are much deeper than the fact that women experience avoidable suffering. Once we realize that every organ in the body has receptor sites for estrogen, progesterone, and testosterone, the connection between hormone decline and disease becomes clear. These receptors are present on the cells of the heart, blood vessels, bones, nerves, muscles, and skin—the majority of the cells in the body. So, when the hormones are imbalanced, women are far more susceptible to an increased risk of heart attacks, strokes, cognitive decline, osteoporosis, and breast cancer.

My personal journey was altered drastically when I went from being a doctor doing a few surgeries a month, to a few surgeries a year, to almost no surgeries at all with the use of bioidentical progesterone, magnesium and encouraging life balance. Modern living is undeniably our greatest

disease. Women living balanced lives, like those in blue zones, barely experience the menopausal symptoms that are all too commonly accepted in the United States. Here are some of my favorite, science-backed ways to create this balance:

Slow down your nervous system to preserve your reserve.

Life balance directly correlates to hormone balance, so simplify your life to create peace. A great exercise is to imagine that you are the sun—when you tend to your fire, you automatically warm the other planets. Taking care of you is the most unselfish thing you can do, and when applied to your everyday priorities, it preserves your hormones. Make an effort to connect to the five elements of nature and your community. For a tangible solution, try taking a lipid-soluble magnesium—my favorite is with magnesium acetyl-taurinate, like the Magnesium MD I developed. It promotes restful sleep, enhances mental clarity, and reduces stress.

Consider Hormone Restoration and/or Activation.

The medical standard is to replace low thyroid, insulin, and cortisol levels. So, it seems logical to also replace low estrogen, progesterone, and testosterone, right? Instead, the evidence leaves clinicians at a loss for clear direction because of conflicting results from numerous studies using synthetic hormones. A comprehensive analysis of data shows that restoration of normal physiologic ratios of hormones with bioidentical hormones is beneficial in alleviating symptoms and, more importantly, degenerative disease.

Bioidentical hormones are the same makeup as those made in the human body, molecule by molecule, so they fit the hormone receptor the same way a key fits into its lock. The body accepts bioidentical hormones like the hormones it makes itself.

Eighteen years ago, I realized that every hormone has minerals and vitamins that are critical activators. The forms on the market were underdosed and full of junk. Met with necessity, I tested and developed 3 hormone supplements with the fewest capsules, correct doses, and no junk (i.e., fillers, dyes, preservatives, and stearates) at MDPrescriptives. Thousands of others and I rely on these for a noticeable difference in energy and vitality.

- **Essential Multi:** contains correct forms and hormone-activating doses of zinc, selenium, iodine, chromium, active B-vitamins, and all essential minerals and vitamins.
- **Magnesium MD:** contains MgAcetylTaurinate, which penetrates the nervous system most effectively, reducing the speed of the nervous system to support sleep, muscle relaxation, energy, and stress.
- **Adrenal Forte:** contains powerful ancient herbs that balance cortisol, support adrenal and thyroid production, boost energy, and improve stress resilience. Many take this when they reach for coffee.

Deficiencies that affect our health start early in life. The best way to protect yourself from these symptoms and their subsequent organ decline is to begin incorporating even one lifestyle practice, like simplifying your life and creating routines that support these habits.

Connect with Dr. Pati: <http://www.mdprescriptives.com/>

A man with a beard and short hair, wearing a dark green patterned button-down shirt and blue pants, is sitting outdoors on a paved path. He is smiling at the camera. The background shows lush green trees, a clear blue sky, and a modern building in the distance.

YOUR *Health* THIS *Holiday* SEASON: MAKE IT PERSONAL AND TAKE CONTROL

BY SAM TEJADA

Think about how much time and energy you spend picking out the perfect holiday gift. You browse websites, walk the aisles, and listen for hints—all to avoid giving something generic - like socks or a candle. The best gifts aren't the ones you grab at the last minute; they're the ones that show thought, care, and attention to the individual. The one that lets them know, "I see you. I know what matters to you."

But here's the truth: while we pour ourselves into personalizing gifts for others, we rarely show the same effort when it comes to our own health. Too often, we accept generic solutions—a multivitamin that may or may not fit our needs, a fad diet that isn't right for our body, or a quick fix that treats symptoms but not the root cause.

This season, what if you treated your health with the same thoughtfulness you put into gift-giving? What if your health plan was designed just for you? The ultimate gift you can give yourself is personalized wellness—care that's tailored to your unique biology, lifestyle, and goals.

Here are five personalized "gifts" that will help you take control of your health this holiday season:

THE HOLIDAY HERO: METHYLENE BLUE

Think of Methylene Blue as the wellness equivalent of that perfect all-in-one gift—useful, meaningful, and designed to make life better. Methylene blue supports your mind, body, and energy all at once.

This powerful therapy is making big waves in wellness, thanks to its broad benefits:

Cognitive clarity— Studies indicate that it may improve memory, focus, and mental stamina for long days and late nights.

More energy— Enhances mitochondrial function, thereby facilitating efficient cellular respiration. This promotes energy production and mitigates fatigue.

Immune defense— Antioxidant effects in the neutralization of free radicals and reducing oxidative stress, a factor linked to numerous chronic diseases. Provide protection during travel and gatherings.

And now, in addition to the IV option, Liquivida also offers Methylene Blue in a convenient sublingual form, allowing it to be easily used at home. **GET PERSONAL WITH PRECISION LAB TESTING.**

Just as buying all of your loved ones the same “one-size-fits-all” gift doesn’t feel especially meaningful, why settle for that with your health?

Advanced lab testing is something that everyone should do for themselves. This type of personalized testing is like getting a gift registry for your body—it shows exactly what will make you thrive.

Even if you’re too busy to get to a doctor’s office, at-home test kits from Genova Diagnostics can unwrap the hidden details of your own biology. This quick and convenient test, done with a simple finger prick and urine sample, helps to determine what your body truly needs by revealing:

- Micronutrient deficiencies
- Hormone imbalances
- Toxin exposure
- Stress-related dysfunction

That knowledge becomes the foundation of a wellness plan built for you—not the masses. **IV THERAPY HOLIDAY RECHARGE**

From jet lag to late nights, December takes a toll. Your holiday survival kit should be as unique as you are. Some people need hydration after travel. Some want immune support before parties. Others just need an energy reset.

That’s why IV therapy is highly customizable—with drips designed to replenish what your body needs most. Whether it’s vitamins, minerals, or antioxidants, IV therapy delivers personalized care directly into your bloodstream for faster, more effective results.

MANAGE STRESS WITH MINDFUL HABITS

Stress affects everyone differently. For one person, it shows up as mood swings. For another, it’s fatigue or digestive upset. That’s why stress management should be personal, too.

Even five minutes of mindfulness—deep breathing, journaling, or a short walk—can calm your nervous system and lower holiday stress. And when paired with lab testing, you can literally see how stress impacts your body chemistry, so your practices are not just thoughtful but effective.

Here’s a mindful moment tip for the holidays: Take three deep breaths before unwrapping gifts. Presence is the best present. **THINK LONG-TERM, NOT JUST DECEMBER.**

The holidays tempt us to think short-term: food, parties, and last-minute gifts. The best gifts are the ones that last. Jewelry, heirlooms, experiences that become memories—these outlive the wrapping paper. Your health should be the same.

Invest in your health like you’d invest in a timeless gift.

Innovations like Methylene Blue therapy, precision testing, and IV drips aren’t just holiday hacks. They’re the foundation for resilience, energy, and clarity that will carry you into the new year and beyond..

Final Thoughts: This holiday season, don’t just shop with intention. Live with intention. The best kind of wellness is personal—because it’s not just about living longer, it’s about living better. Show yourself the same thoughtfulness you show your loved ones by personalizing your health.

Visit Liquivida.com today and order two of the best gifts you can give yourself: an at-home lab testing kit from Genova Diagnostics and sublingual Methylene Blue drops.

Because the best gift you can give yourself—and your family—isn’t something under the tree. It’s the gift of a healthier, more vibrant you.

And what could be a better gift than that?





Love Beyond Time: **HOW MEETING DR. BERNARD BAIL TRANSFORMED MY LIFE**

BY CYNTHIA MARKS

WHEN HOPE FELT OUT OF REACH

For years, I thought I understood love. I had been married three times, and each time I promised myself that no matter what happened, I would stay. Divorce felt like failure, and I carried that sense of “less than” with me like a heavy stone.

I went to therapy to try to make sense of it all. Was it me? Was it them? Why was I repeating the same painful patterns? Yet no matter how much I talked, I never reached the root of why my relationships weren’t working. I told myself maybe this was simply what marriage was meant to be.

So, I quietly settled into a life of isolation and loneliness, losing hope for anything better.

AN UNEXPECTED INTRODUCTION

One day, a friend referred me to an older man who needed design help. As an interior designer, I assumed he just wanted a new recliner. Instead, I found myself in the home of psychoanalyst Dr. Bernard Bail—a dapper, witty, fiercely intelligent, decorated WWII veteran whose apartment overflowed with art and artifacts from his travels. As I worked on his project, our connection grew. At first, I felt intimidated by his world of psychoanalysis—it was foreign to me. He often spoke about his work with dreams, so to keep the conversation flowing, I casually shared one of mine, a dream that included him. That moment, Bernard later admitted, was when he knew I would be his wife.

DREAMS, IMPRINTS, AND A NEW WAY OF SEEING LOVE

Dr. Bail was not just any psychoanalyst. He devoted his life to pioneering what he called the Theory of Imprinting—the idea that experiences in the womb and early childhood leave unconscious imprints that shape our lives, especially in love and relationships.

He believed dreams were a direct doorway into this unconscious world. By exploring them, we could uncover limiting imprints, heal old wounds, and move closer to what he called pure love.

When Bernard listened to my dream, he didn’t just hear words—he heard my inner world. For the first time, I felt truly seen. One afternoon, still married to my third husband, he said something I’ll never forget:

“You may have a marriage license, but you’re not truly married.”

That sentence opened a door I thought was permanently shut. For the first time, I gave myself permission to question the life I had been forcing myself to live. Eventually, I made the difficult choice to end my marriage. It wasn’t easy, but it was an act of self-respect.

LOVE WITHOUT LIMITS

I didn’t yet know I would fall in love with Bernard, but I was learning to love myself enough to walk toward a different life.

When we became a couple—and later married—challenges arose. People questioned my intentions. Strangers assumed I was his daughter or caretaker. But what mattered most was how he made me feel: seen, respected, and loved without judgment.

During our years together, we lived fully—traveling, dancing the tango, laughing often, and sharing deep conversations about dreams and his work. Even in his final years, when I became his caregiver, I felt only gratitude for the love we had built.

Bernard lived to be 100 years old. When he passed, he left me with the greatest gift: the understanding that love has no age, no limit, and no expiration date.

CARRYING HIS LEGACY FORWARD

Before he died, Bernard asked me to ensure his work would continue. His vision was bold—he believed love was not just an emotion but a fundamental force woven into human existence. He wanted people to understand that by working through dreams and imprints, we can break free from cycles of pain and move toward transformation for generations to come.

Today, I carry that wish forward as head of the Holistic Psychoanalysis Foundation and through the And Now, Love podcast. Each episode features conversations with psychoanalysts, pediatricians, community leaders, and activists. We explore dreams, therapy, unconscious patterns, and love as a path to healing and growth. It's my way of keeping his message alive, and of offering hope to anyone who, like me, once felt love was out of reach.

LESSONS OF HOPE

My story is not about finding an older partner—it's about discovering that it's never too late to experience pure love, within yourself and with another. Here are the lessons I carry forward:

- Age is just a number. Love and vitality come from the spirit, not the birth certificate.
- Self-love matters. Real love begins when you stop settling and start honoring your worth.
- Dreams are a guide. Pay attention to what surfaces at night—they may carry messages about what is ready to be healed.
- Appreciate the moments. Shared laughter, quiet evenings, whispered “I love yous”—these are the memories that last.



CHOOSING HOPE

If you are in a place where hope feels distant, I want you to know this: change is possible. Your story is not over. Love—in all its forms—may arrive in ways you least expect.

Bernard was my gift, and I was his. He taught me that love is not only about romance, but about transformation. And through the podcast created in his honor, I hope others can discover that love, too.

Because hope and love, in the end, are what carry us all forward.

Start Listening:

<https://linktr.ee/andnowlovepodcast>



COMBINING EXERCISE WITH PLANT-BASED NUTRITION DRAMATICALLY CUTS DIABETES RISK—*DUH!*

BY DOUGLAS MULHALL

A major study has provided the strongest evidence yet that combining a Mediterranean-style diet with calorie reduction and exercise dramatically prevents the onset of type 2 diabetes in older adults with excess weight.

While previous studies have highlighted the benefits of whole-food, plant-based diets and increased physical activity for diabetes prevention, this latest blinded, randomized controlled trial stands out as a milestone in diabetes research, offering definitive results about the synergistic impact of diet and exercise. [1][2][3][4][5][6]

STUDY DESIGN AND CORE FINDINGS

The research, led by teams at Harvard and institutions across Spain, followed 4,746 adults aged 55–75 years who were overweight or suffering from metabolic syndrome but had not yet developed diabetes. Participants were randomized into two groups: [2][7]

- One group adopted a traditional Mediterranean diet, emphasizing fruits, vegetables, nuts, and extra-virgin olive oil, while minimizing meat and added sugars, without calorie restriction or structured exercise advice. [7][2]
- The intervention group undertook a calorie-reduced Mediterranean diet (about 600 fewer calories daily), engaged in a moderate physical activity plan (including brisk walking, strength, flexibility, and balance exercises), and received professional guidance and support. [4][2][7]

After six years, the group combining diet, calorie reduction, and exercise saw a 31% lower risk of developing type 2 diabetes compared to those following the Mediterranean diet alone. This risk reduction was observed even when weight loss was relatively modest, with an average of just 3.3 kg lost over the study period in the intervention group. [6][2][4]



CLARIFYING THE 31% REDUCTION STATISTIC

A key figure reported by the study is the 31% reduction in diabetes risk. It is important to clarify what this number means:

- The 31% reduction is specifically the difference between the intervention group (Mediterranean diet, calorie reduction, and exercise) and the control group (Mediterranean diet alone, ad libitum caloric intake, and no structured exercise). [2][4][6]
- This reduction is not compared to a no-Mediterranean diet “usual care” or a Western diet control group. Instead, both groups consumed a Mediterranean diet, but only the intervention group added the calorie restriction and exercise regimen. [7][2]

This difference highlights the additive and presumably synergistic impact of pairing dietary improvements with physical activity and calorie management. The implication is that while the Mediterranean diet alone is beneficial, sustainable weight loss and exercise multiply the prevention potential. [4][2][6]

THE PROVEN ROLE OF PLANT-BASED DIETS

While this trial focused on the Mediterranean diet, it advances a growing body of evidence that whole food, plant-based diets are powerful tools to prevent and manage diabetes. Observational studies show much lower rates of diabetes among vegans and vegetarians than omnivores, even after adjusting for BMI and other risk factors. Diets rich in legumes, whole grains, vegetables, fruits, and nuts consistently deliver lower rates of diabetes, improved blood sugar control, and greater medication reduction or even remission. [3][5][8][9][1][10]

Randomized trials have demonstrated superb results:

- Up to 37% remission rates for type 2 diabetes on whole food, plant-based regimens, and [1]
- Significant improvements in insulin sensitivity, body composition, and cardiometabolic outcomes. [5][3]
- Up to 71% reduction in diabetes onset in patients over 60 who made lifestyle and dietary changes. [10]

These findings are why preventive medicine organizations and diabetes experts increasingly advocate for plant-forward dietary patterns, not only to reduce new diabetes cases but also to improve overall health and control costs. [9][5]

THE IMPORTANCE OF EXERCISE

Physical activity itself is a cornerstone of diabetes prevention. Aerobic exercise, strength training, and balance work improve glucose metabolism and insulin sensitivity. The trial implemented a prescription of 45 minutes of aerobic activity six days per week—such as brisk walking, swimming, or cycling—along with resistance and flexibility exercises. [2][4][7]

Crucially, results showed that only modest weight loss was needed to realize large benefits. This points to underlying improvements in visceral fat, muscle composition, and insulin response, which exercise brings about beyond simple calorie deficit or scale weight changes. [4]

IMPLICATIONS AND FUTURE DIRECTIONS

The results of the PREDIMED-Plus trial have major public health implications. For at-risk populations—those with overweight, obesity, or metabolic syndrome—adopting an optimized Mediterranean diet coupled with a moderate, regular exercise plan could prevent millions of type 2 diabetes cases annually. As type 2 diabetes reaches epidemic proportions globally, scalable and sustainable lifestyle interventions like those confirmed in this study are essential. [6][2][4]

Looking ahead, researchers hope to extend this evidence to other major public health threats linked to lifestyle: cardiovascular disease, kidney disease, and certain cancers. Meanwhile, for practitioners and individuals, the message is clear: a plant-forward diet, calorie mindfulness, and physical activity are not only safe and accessible—they are now proven by gold-standard research to be among the most effective strategies for diabetes prevention. [3][5][9][1][2][4]

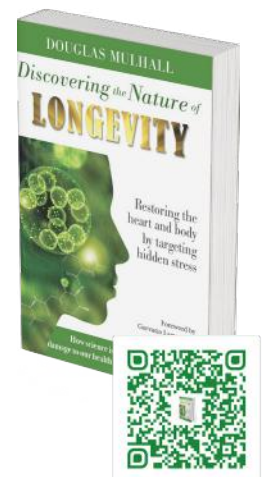
Surprisingly, though, almost none of these studies examine the link between plant-based diets, exercise, and preventing calcification that leads to hardening of arteries. This is despite the fact that almost all of us develop calcified arteries as we age. To learn more about how calcification is being reversed, read *Discovering the Nature of Longevity*, and use it as a stocking stuffer for your friends and family [1]!

Connect with Douglas Mulhall:

<http://bestholisticlife.info/TheNatureofLongevity>

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THE POWER OF GRACE

...HEALING BODY, MIND, AND SPIRIT

BY TONYA FINES

If there's one truth I've seen over and over again in my work with women navigating peri-menopause, pre-menopause, and menopause, it's this...

We are our own harshest critics. Somewhere along the way, we've been taught that strength means pushing through, holding it together, and never admitting when we're tired, overwhelmed, or simply human. Here is some truth talk ... our bodies, our minds, and our spirits are not meant to run endlessly without rest. And yet, many of us struggle to give ourselves the very thing we so freely extend to others...

I'm talking about GRACE.

Why does grace matter? I mean, who has time for that, right? Grace isn't indulgence. Grace isn't a weakness.

Grace is permission.

It is the radical act of saying, "I am human, I am worthy, and I don't have to be perfect for my life to have value and purpose."

Research backs this up. Studies have shown that self-compassion, a first cousin to grace, has profound effects on both mental and physical health. Dr. Kristin Neff, a pioneer in the field of self-compassion, has found that women who practice self-kindness instead of self-criticism experience lower levels of stress, anxiety, and depression (Neff, 2011). And these aren't just emotional benefits. Chronic stress is linked to higher inflammation, disrupted sleep, and even increased risk of cardiovascular disease (American Psychological Association, 2020).

When we deny ourselves grace, we're not just hurting our hearts... we're harming our health. Let me ask you... What does the internal dialogue you have with yourself on a recurring basis sound like? And I want you to be honest with yourself here, because most of us would never speak to a friend the way we speak to ourselves. Yet, inside our own minds, we can be downright cruel...

“You should be doing more.” “You’re not enough.” “Why can’t you keep it together?” These phrases, repeated day after day, become heavy burdens we carry. Want to hear some good news about this? I thought so...

Enter neuroscience ... and tremendous hope. You see, our brains are remarkably adaptable. By consciously shifting our internal dialogue, catching ourselves in criticism, and replacing it with kindness, we can actually begin to rewire our neural pathways. This practice doesn’t erase our challenges, but it can transform how we walk through them. #BOOM

How full is your “cup?” You cannot pour from an empty cup, but many of us try to do so consistently. Whether it’s showing up for family, colleagues, or friends, we forget that filling our own cup is not selfish; it’s essential. Research from the Journal of Behavioral Medicine (Sirois et al., 2015) found that individuals who practiced self-compassion were more likely to engage in health-promoting behaviors, from eating well to exercising, simply because they believed they were worth caring for. P.S.... You are worth caring for!

Grace looks different for everyone. For one woman, it may be a long walk by the water. For another, saying “no” to one more responsibility. For someone else, it’s five minutes of journaling before the day begins. The how doesn’t matter, but the intention does.

Let’s address the perception of perfection. Many of us hold tightly to perfection, believing it’s the key to success or acceptance. But perfection is a mirage, always dancing JUST out of reach. Letting go isn’t about lowering standards; it’s about recognizing that your worth isn’t tied to flawless performance.

Getting real with ourselves during the menopause transition becomes key. Hormonal shifts can affect mood, energy, and focus. Expecting ourselves to operate at the same pace as in our 30s isn’t realistic. It’s downright unkind. Grace invites us to recalibrate and say, “This season is different, and that’s okay. I am still me. I am still valuable. I still have great purpose.”

What if grace were as essential to your health as food, sleep, or movement? Turns out it actually is. The Mayo Clinic notes that practicing self-compassion can lower cortisol levels, improve immune function, and foster resilience (Mayo Clinic Staff, 2021).



Think of grace as medicine, not the kind you pick up at a pharmacy, but the kind you generate from within. Every time you release the need for perfection, or silence the critic in your head, or pause to refill your cup, you’re giving your body a dose of healing.

And here’s an even more beautiful element to all this... grace doesn’t stop with you. When you learn to soften toward yourself, you naturally soften toward others. Relationships grow stronger, patience deepens, and empathy expands. As you give yourself permission to be human, you create a ripple effect that touches everyone around you. So today, I invite you to pause. Take a deep breath, and say to yourself... I am worthy of grace. I am enough!

You do not need to earn rest. You do not need to prove your worth. You do not need to hold yourself to impossible standards to be loved... especially by yourself.

The changes you experience during perimenopause, pre-menopause, and menopause are not only physical transitions. They are invitations. This is a call to honor yourself in new ways. To listen more deeply, to love more freely, and to let go of what no longer serves you. When you give yourself grace, you don’t just survive these seasons; you thrive in them...

And this, my friend, you deserve.

Connect with Tonya Fines: <https://bestholisticlife.info/TonyaMFines>



MAKE MUSCLE THE MISSION: WHY HEALTH PROS MUST LEAD THE CHARGE ON MUSCLE HEALTH AND HORMONAL RESTORATION THIS NEW YEAR

BY DR. ERIC FETE



Every January, the cycle repeats itself.

People resolve to lose weight, eat healthier, and exercise more – and by February, the gyms are half-empty and motivation is gone.

As a fitness professional, health coach, or performance leader, you've seen this happen repeatedly. Your clients start strong, then fizzle out because they're chasing the wrong target – weight loss at all costs.

This year, I want to challenge you – and your clients – to take a different approach.

Instead of just “losing weight,” let's make muscle health, hormone, and metabolic restoration the central focus of every New Year's plan. Because the truth is:

Muscle is the medicine.

Hormones are the code.

And when you optimize both, weight loss becomes a natural side effect – not a battle.

WHY MUSCLE NEEDS TO BE THE MISSION

Muscle isn't just about aesthetics or performance. It's the most

metabolically active organ in your body. It's a glucose sink, a fat-burning powerhouse, and protective armor against aging.

WHEN YOUR CLIENTS GAIN MUSCLE, THEY:

- Improve insulin sensitivity and stabilize blood sugar
- Burn more calories at rest (higher basal metabolic rate)
- Reduce inflammation and lower disease risk
- Improve hormone balance, including testosterone, estrogen, growth hormone, and thyroid function

Build strength and confidence that spills over into every other area of life. Conversely, when they lose muscle—which happens with age, inactivity, and poor nutrition—everything gets harder: fat loss stalls, recovery slows, and energy crashes.

As a professional, you know this. But most clients don't. Most of them are still living in an “eat less, move more” world – cutting calories too hard, doing endless cardio, and wondering why their body composition never really changes.

THE HORMONE CONNECTION

Here's what I tell every patient and athlete I work with:

Muscle health and hormone health are inseparable. If testosterone, thyroid, growth hormone, or cortisol are out of balance, building muscle becomes almost impossible – no matter how perfect the training and nutrition plan.

That's why, at Primex, we start with comprehensive labs and cellular health assessments before we ever prescribe a program. Because once you fix the internal environment – the “hormone code” – the external results follow much faster.

As a coach or trainer, you may not be prescribing hormones, but you can still educate your clients on the importance of testing, recovery, sleep, and stress management. And you can partner with practitioners (like myself) who can optimize what's happening under the hood.

HOW TO LEAD YOUR CLIENTS THROUGH A MUSCLE-FIRST NEW YEAR

Here's how you can help your clients – and yourself – turn this year's resolutions into real, lasting transformation.

1. Shift the Goal From “Weight Loss” to “Body Recomposition”

Teach your clients to think beyond the scale.

Measure body fat percentage, lean mass, and strength PRs – not just pounds. When they focus on building muscle and strength, the number on the scale becomes just one metric, not the only metric.

2. Build Protein-Centric Nutrition Plans

Most clients are under-eating protein by a mile.

Encourage them to aim for 1 gram per pound of lean body mass – and educate them on how this supports recovery, muscle repair, and satiety. Help them structure meals around protein first, then add healthy fats and complex carbs based on their activity level.

3. Prioritize Strength Training Over Endless Cardio

Muscle is built under tension, not on a treadmill.

Progressive resistance training should be the foundation of every client's program. Teach them proper form, track their lifts, and celebrate strength gains. These wins keep them motivated long after the New Year's hype fades.

4. Address Sleep and Stress

Muscle growth and fat loss both depend on recovery.

Educate your clients about getting 7-9 hours of quality sleep, managing stress hormones like cortisol, and using active recovery techniques (walking, mobility work, breathwork).

5. Consider Cellular Health Optimization

When appropriate, guide clients toward functional labs or medical partners who can test hormones, micronutrients, and inflammation markers. By addressing root causes – rather than guessing – you'll get them better results and separate yourself as a truly next-level coach.

WHAT THIS MEANS FOR YOU AS A PROFESSIONAL

This isn't just about client outcomes – it's about your growth as a leader.

The fitness industry is inundated with quick fixes, six-week challenges, and superficial solutions. The professionals who rise above are those who:

- Understand the deeper science of metabolism, hormones, and cellular health
- Deliver lasting results instead of temporary transformations
- Position themselves as trusted, evidence-based authorities in their space

When you make muscle health the centerpiece of your coaching, you future-proof your business. You move from being a “trainer” to being a transformation architect.

And here's the bonus: as you get your own muscle, hormones, and energy dialed in, you become your own best marketing. You embody the message you teach.

A CALL TO LEAD THIS NEW YEAR.

Your clients are looking for someone to lead them through the noise, confusion, and misinformation that floods their feed every January.

Be that leader.

And if you're ready to take this mission to the next level – to not just transform individuals, but to revolutionize health on a cellular level – I'd love to connect with you.

At Primex, we're building an army of fitness pros and health leaders who are ready to spread this message and get paid to change lives.

Let's make this New Year the one where we stop managing decline and start reclaiming dominance – for ourselves, for our clients, and for the future of health.

Because muscle is medicine, hormones are the code.

And this year, we're going to teach the world how to use both.

ARE YOU A HEALTH COACH OR WELLNESS ENTHUSIAST THAT'S READY TO FEEL WHOLE AGAIN?

You're not sluggish, inflamed, or plateaued because you eat too much.

You're stuck because you've been lied to—by Big Pharma, broken medical dogma, and a fitness industry more obsessed with shrinking bodies than building strong, holistic, high-performing ones.

At Primex Cellular Health, we believe in whole-person care—not just for patients, but for our health coaches as well.

Book your personal tele-health hormone consultation with Dr. Eric Fete today. Visit us for free resources, nutrition tips, and wellness guidance.

Call or text us at 1-740-777-9717 for fast, friendly support.

Stay Prime. Stay whole. Stay you.

—Dr. Eric

Connect with Dr. Eric Fete: <https://bestholisticlife.info/Drericprimex>



Beauty

AFTER SURVIVAL: HOW MICRO-CAPSULE HAIR EXTENSIONS EMPOWER WOMEN POST-CANCER

BY ANASTASIA LOVE

The Power of Hair in Healing.

For many women, hair is more than just beauty—it's identity, confidence, and strength. After overcoming the battle with cancer, regaining this sense of self can be an important step in the healing journey. While wigs and temporary solutions have long been available, a revolutionary method of hair restoration—micro-capsule hair extensions—is giving survivors new possibilities to feel like themselves again.

Unlike traditional wigs or bulk extensions, micro-capsule hair extensions offer a natural, seamless look and the freedom to style hair with confidence. At Studio Queen Hair in Los Angeles, I have had the honor of working with many courageous women who survived cancer and chose this technique to reclaim their beauty and power.

WHAT ARE MICRO-CAPSULE HAIR EXTENSIONS?

Micro-capsule extensions are tiny, lightweight keratin bonds that attach small strands of premium hair to your natural hair. Unlike bulky glue or tape methods, each capsule is nearly invisible and feels like your own. This technique is especially designed for precision and comfort.

However, it's important to note that micro-capsule extensions can only be applied when there is natural hair growth—even if it's short. For women who have lost hair completely during chemotherapy, the process must wait until regrowth has begun.

WHY THIS TECHNIQUE IS LIFE-CHANGING FOR SURVIVORS

Cancer survivors who choose micro-capsule extensions often share how deeply transformative the experience feels. It's not just about beauty—it's about resilience, joy, and freedom. Here are some of the benefits:

1. **Natural look and feel:** The micro-capsules blend perfectly, making it almost impossible to distinguish extensions from natural hair.
2. **Gentle on fragile hair:** The keratin tips are lightweight and applied with precision, avoiding unnecessary tension.
3. **Styling freedom:** From ponytails to waves, clients can style their hair just as they would with their own.



4. Confidence restored: Many women say this is the moment they start to feel truly themselves again.

ACTIONABLE TIPS FOR WOMEN CONSIDERING EXTENSIONS POST-CANCER.

If you or a loved one is considering hair extensions after recovery, here are some practical guidelines:

- Wait for regrowth. Extensions require some natural hair to hold onto. Typically, a minimum of a few centimeters is needed.
- Consult a specialist. Not every stylist is trained in techniques for fragile, post-treatment hair. Seek out certified experts with medical hair-loss experience.
- Choose quality hair. Slavic hair—lightweight, silky, and durable—remains one of the best options for natural results.
- Start small. Many clients begin with partial applications (filling in thinner areas) before committing to a full head.
- Commit to maintenance. Extensions need to be adjusted every 8–10 weeks as your hair grows. Consistent care ensures they stay safe and beautiful.
- Be gentle at home. Use a soft brush, avoid harsh pulling, and apply sulfate-free shampoos to protect both natural and extension hair.
- Enjoy styling again. Micro-capsules open up options—ponytails, braids, curls, sleek blowouts—that often feel impossible with wigs or shorter hair.

BEYOND BEAUTY: A SYMBOL OF STRENGTH

Hair extensions may seem like a cosmetic service, but for many women, they symbolize something much deeper: survival, recovery, and hope. Seeing themselves in the mirror with a hairstyle they once loved helps bridge the gap between the life before cancer and the vibrant future ahead.

Every strand added is not just about beauty—it's about writing a new chapter. For some, it's the first time they dare to plan a photoshoot, attend a gala, or simply walk into a room with their head held high again.

To every survivor reading this: your journey is not defined by what you lost, but by



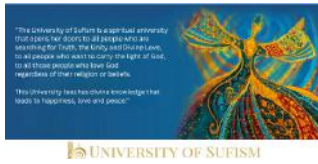
the courage you carry. If you are ready to reclaim your crown, micro-capsule hair extensions may be the bridge between survival and renewed self-expression.

Because every queen deserves to feel beautiful again.

Connect with Anastasia:

www.studioqueenhair.com





A SUFI REFLECTION ON PEACE

BY SALIMA ADELSTEIN

A Gift for your Spirit in the Holy Month of December

Every December, I ask my husband if there is anything special on his holiday list. He always answers the same...WORLD PEACE! One year, I found a world peace mug and a hand towel, which was amusing, and we both still have serious hope for that day.

Peace is not a place, eternal rest, or a climb up Mt. Everest. To arrive at true peace in the world, it first needs to be something experienced inside our own hearts.

My name, Salima, means “one whose heart rests in the deep peace of God to transmit that peace to all.” When I traveled the Sufi path, an ancient, mystical tradition focused on a direct experience of the Divine, it changed my life and how I think about world peace. I experienced a brilliant white light full of love, mercy, and compassion for all beings, a Divine light that washed away old pain and brought lasting inner peace. I also experienced new ways of advocating for peace—not through my righteous anger, but instead through learning to see everyone as a mirror of myself, holding onto the belief that each person, even in difficult moments, contains the holiness God has bestowed on all of creation.

We have a saying in Sufism from the holy prophets: “You think you are a small star when in fact you comprise the entire universe.” I invite you to reflect on this saying and really take it deep into your heart, where your true, holy wisdom lives. See what it inspires within your heart and how it impacts your inner peace.

The great Sufi poet, Rumi, says:

“There is a gem in the mountain of your body; seek and fall in love. The world is a mountain. Whatever you say, it will echo it back to you.”

Falling in love, as Rumi describes, is a relationship between the lover (us) and the Beloved (God); the ability to know an unconditional love that is everlasting lives within everyone. Connecting and aligning to that Love is the key. Through the process of purification and beautification of our hearts, we lift the veils of worry, fear, and doubt keeping us from knowing the greatest gifts and treasures lying deep within our hearts. This naturally leads to peace in our heart and from our heart, the world.

I believe that God is Love, we come from love, we are love, and we will return to love. That is my definition of holy. Whether you believe in God or agree with Jane Goodall in saying, “I don’t have any idea of who or what



God is. But I do believe in some great spiritual power. I feel it particularly when I'm out in nature. It's just something that's bigger and stronger than what I am or what anybody is." It doesn't matter what you call that greater presence; the idea of holiness reflects our wholeness, our connection to all there is, our unity, and our purpose for being here on earth at this time.

This brings to mind a Sufi story:

A stream, from its course in the far-off mountains, passing through different countryside, at last reached the sands of the desert. Just as it had crossed every other barrier, the stream tried to cross this one but found that as fast as it ran into the sand, its waters disappeared.

It was convinced, however, that its destiny was to cross this desert, and yet there was no way. Now, a hidden voice, coming from the desert itself, whispered, "The wind crosses the desert, and so can the stream." But how could this happen? "By allowing yourself to be absorbed in the wind."

This idea was not acceptable to the stream. After all, it had never been absorbed before. It did not want to lose its individuality. And, once having lost it, how was one to know that one's identity could ever be regained?

"The wind," said the sand, "performs this function. It takes up water, carries it over the desert, and then lets it fall again."

"But can I not remain the same stream that I am today?"

"You cannot in either case remain so," the whisper said.

When it heard this, it remembered a state in which it—or some part of it—had been held in the arms of a wind.

And the stream raised its moisture into the welcoming arms of the wind, which gently and easily bore it upwards and along, letting it fall softly as rain. When they reached the top of a mountain, it then became a river.

The truth is, we are not the same as we were yesterday, nor will we be the same as we will be tomorrow. To create positive change in ourselves

and in the world, we need the Sufi tools of purification and beautification now more than ever. Finding what unites us, how we fall in love, not separation, and standing for the goodness and holiness in everyone and everything will bring about a mountain of change and allow the river to flow in God's unending ocean of Love and Peace.

Change is not always easy, and we all will most likely meet some resistance and difficulties along the way, such as hearing the voices of hopelessness, despair, and anxiety present in our world today. Our holiness never leaves us; it may just get hidden or covered for a time. When we remember our holiness, trust, and pray for help, support, and guidance, we will remain resolute and persistent. I believe we will help the world move one step closer to peace.

Let's ring that bell of truth and fly a flag of unity carrying this beautiful Sufi message of Peace, Love, Mercy, Justice, and Freedom.

As we close out the year, may we reflect on the wisdom from the Sufi path, which cultivates love, compassion, peace, and unity. May our hearts heal from heartbreaks and disappointments, and may we find our true inner beauty. May we prioritize our well-being, our relationships, and our spiritual practices, and see the good in others this December, cultivating a more fulfilling and purposeful end of year.

And may we approach the new year with hope, optimism, and a deepening sense of connection to ourselves, others, and the Divine. May peace prevail on Earth and in each of your hearts.

To learn more about these Sufi practices and how to find peace within your heart, sign up for the University of Sufism's free series, "The Five C's of Inner Truth," at <https://sufi.net/5c/> or take the 7-day power of prayer peace challenge.

Connect with Salima: <https://sufi.net/5c/>

MOVING BEYOND PRODUCTIVITY HACKS TO REAL FULFILLMENT

BY AL WYNANT

As the year comes to a close, I've been reflecting on what really matters. Like many of you, I've spent years measuring success by productivity, checklists, projects completed, and color-coded calendars. You should see mine; it often looks like a rainbow exploded across the page. And yet, despite all the organization, I've ended years with a lingering sense that something was missing, especially this year.

That's when I realized: productivity is not the same as fulfillment. Real growth isn't about cramming more into the day. It's about asking a deeper question: Who am I becoming in the process?

A YEAR THAT CHANGED ME

This past year has tested me in ways I didn't anticipate. There were moments of loss that left me feeling unanchored, challenges that seemed relentless, and obstacles that stretched my resilience to its breaking point. Some days, success wasn't about progress or achievement; it was simply about putting one foot in front of the other and making it to the end of the day. I won't sugarcoat it: there were times when I felt depleted, when I questioned my strength, and when I wondered how much more I could carry.

And yet, in the middle of that struggle, something unexpected happened. The noise of "doing" began to quiet, and I started hearing a deeper voice inside me, a call toward clarity. The difficulties stripped away the nonessential and revealed what truly matters. I realized that life is far too short and too precious to be lived only on the surface, moving from task to task, or chasing accomplishments that look good on paper but don't nourish the heart.

I don't want to live on autopilot anymore. I don't want to confuse motion with meaning. I don't want to just "get by." What I long for is

to live more deeply, to pause, to connect, to breathe, to honor the people and experiences that make life rich. I want to choose meaning over distraction, connection over isolation, and growth over busyness.

That's why I am stepping into the new year with a renewed commitment to whole-person growth. For me, it's not about adding more to my plate, but about becoming more present, more authentic, and more aligned with who I truly am. It's about shifting the question from "How much did I accomplish today?" to "How did I grow, connect, and show up as the person I aspire to be?"

WHY PRODUCTIVITY ALONE ISN'T ENOUGH

I've tried every productivity hack out there: time blocking, the five-minute rule, and elaborate task systems. They've helped me stay organized, but they never answer the deeper questions that guide a fulfilling life:

Am I aligned with my values?

Am I showing up as the person I want to be?

Am I building resilience and well-being, or just chasing a longer to-do list?

Without those answers, productivity feels like running on a treadmill. There's motion, but no real progress toward who I want to become.

WHOLE-PERSON GROWTH

What I've learned is that none of us are just the sum of what we get done. We are mind, body, spirit, and community. Fulfillment comes when we nurture all of those dimensions, not just our output.

For me, that means focusing on three important shifts:

1. Resilience Over Efficiency

Efficiency gets the task done, but resilience is what carries us when life doesn't go as planned.

This past year reminded me that it's not how fast I move, but how gracefully I recover that matters most.

2. Clarity Over Busyness

It's easy to fill every hour with activity, but busyness is not the same as purpose. Clarity forces me to pause and ask: What truly matters right now? When I align my choices with my values, I find more peace, even in the busiest seasons.

3. Connection Over Achievement

I've accomplished things that looked great on paper but felt hollow without connection. Whole-person growth asks us to nurture relationships with ourselves, with others, and with the world around us. Connection is what gives our achievements meaning.

MY DAILY CHECK-IN

One practice that's been transformative for me is what I call the "Doing vs. Becoming" check-in. Each morning, I make two lists: What I need to do. Who I want to be as I do it. For example:

Do: Finish project report.

Become: A thoughtful communicator who uplifts my team.

Do: Grocery shopping.

Become: A present and joyful partner preparing for family time together.

This small shift transforms ordinary tasks into opportunities for growth. I'm not just checking boxes; I'm practicing resilience, clarity, and connection in real time.

LIVING INTO FULFILLMENT

So as I look back on this year, I'm no longer asking myself, "Did I do enough?" Instead, I'm asking, "Did I become more of the person I aspire to be?"

My next chapter is about intention, cultivating joy in small moments, aligning my choices



with my values, and prioritizing relationships that nourish me. It's about leaning into gratitude, purpose, and growth, not as things to chase, but as ways to live.

Because in the end, our legacy won't be how many tasks we completed. It will be found in who we became along the way.

REFLECTION PROMPTS FOR YOUR OWN GROWTH

If you're ready to move beyond productivity and into fulfillment, here are a few questions you can carry into the new year:

What am I most proud of becoming this past year, not just accomplishing?

Where in my life am I busy but not aligned with what matters most to me? How do I want to show up differently in the year ahead, for myself, for others, and for the world around me?

Take a few minutes with these questions, journal your thoughts, and revisit them often. They might just help you uncover the fulfillment you've been seeking.

In the end, fulfillment isn't found in how much we do, but in how deeply we live, love, and grow into the person we were always meant to become.

Connect with Al Wynant: <https://bestholisticlife.info/INGOMU>





THE WARRIOR'S MIND:

5 BRUTAL TRUTHS EVERY MAN MUST FACE TO STOP WASTING HIS LIFE

BY SCOTT GATES

Life doesn't care how tough you used to be. It doesn't care that you wore a uniform, carried a weapon, ran into burning buildings, or worked your body to the bone. Life will still hit you. It will test your mind, break your routines, and leave you staring in the mirror, wondering if you're still the man you once were.

Most men waste their lives chasing comfort, hiding from pain, and drowning in distraction. But comfort makes men weak. And distraction steals decades. If you're ex-military, a first responder, or a blue-collar man trying to hold it all together, you don't need soft encouragement. You need the truth. The brutal truth.

What follows are five complex realities about the human mind—backed by philosophy, psychology, and neuroscience—that will either sharpen you into steel... or leave you exposed if you ignore them.

Here are five brutal truths about the human mind, drawn from Stoicism, Buddhism, Jungian psychology, and neuroscience—combined with NLP techniques that build mental toughness, discipline, and resilience. These truths are not soft encouragements. They are battle-tested realities.

1. Your mind isn't built for happiness—it's built for survival.

Your brain is a survival machine. It constantly scans for danger and remembers pain more vividly than joy. That's why you replay failures, why trauma sticks, and why the future feels heavy. The Buddhists referred to it as "dukkha"—the constant dissatisfaction of life. The Stoics warned that an untrained mind enslaves itself to fear. Neuroscience confirms it: your amygdala reacts more strongly to negative experiences than positive ones.

NLP Reframe: Instead of resenting this, use it to your advantage. Ask: "If my brain is designed to protect me, how can I aim that protection toward growth instead of fear?" When the old story of failure replays, interrupt it. Replace it with the image of you standing tall, steady, and unbroken. That's mental toughness training in real time.

2. You are not your thoughts—but your thoughts are shaping you.

Your thoughts carve grooves in the brain. Negative loops hardwire bitterness, anxiety, or helplessness. Jung warned, "Until you make the unconscious conscious, it will direct your life and you will call it fate."



NLP Pattern Break: Catch one destructive thought today—"I can't change" or "It's too late for me." Snap a band on your wrist, exhale, or clap your hands to break the pattern. Replace it with: "That was the old me. I choose strength." This small act, repeated, rewires the unconscious mind for resilience.

3. Freedom without discipline is just another prison.

Modern life offers endless choices—beer, scrolling, fast food, and entertainment. But many men become slaves to their impulses. The Stoics knew this: freedom without self-control is a form of slavery. Neuroscience agrees—dopamine rewards unchecked turn into addiction. And addiction makes you a servant to habit.

NLP Anchoring: Identity beats willpower. Say: "I am a man who shows up. I am a man who does the hard thing first." Anchor it with a gesture—fist to chest, steady breath. Fire it every morning until your body believes it. Make this discipline your default mode, your basic daily operating system.

4. Pain is the price of growth—and running from it multiplies it.

Avoiding pain only compounds it. Anxiety grows in avoidance. Regret festers in procrastination. Weakness spreads in comfort. The Stoics embraced voluntary hardship—such as cold, hunger, and long marches—to prepare their minds. Modern neuroscience confirms that exposure therapy works in a similar way: face the fear, and the brain rewires itself.

NLP Visualization: Don't focus on the pain. Picture the man you become on the other side of it—calm, unshakable, strong. Step into him in your mind. Feel his breathing, his confidence, and his presence. Then act as him, not as the fearful version of you.

5. You will die—and almost everything you do will be forgotten.

Here is the sharpest truth: you will die. So will everyone you love. In a generation or two, your name will be dust. But this is freedom, not despair. Remembering death cuts away the trivial. The Stoics called it "memento mori"—remember you must die. Neuroscience reveals that heightened awareness of mortality fosters a stronger sense of urgency, deeper meaning, and greater motivation in one's life.

NLP Time Projection: Imagine yourself on your deathbed, looking back. What choices would you regret not making? What courage do you wish you had shown? Now return to the present. Make that choice today.



Discipline over comfort. Courage over avoidance.

Presence over distraction.

Here's the bottom line: your default mind is not your friend. Left unchecked, it will waste your life, dull your edge, and bury you in regret.

But the mind you train—the mind you forge through discipline, pain, and presence—becomes the sharpest weapon you'll ever carry.

So stop waiting. Stop numbing yourself. Stop lying about "someday."

Discipline over comfort. Courage over avoidance. Presence over distraction. Live the code. Because every man dies... yet not every man truly lives.

The Warrior's Code:

For men who refuse to waste their lives, carry this creed:

I will not seek happiness—I will create discipline.

I am not my thoughts, but I am responsible for them.

I will master my impulses, or they will master me.

I will lean into pain, for pain is the forge of growth.

I will remember death daily, so I may live urgently and without waste.

Connect with Scott Gates: <https://bestholisticlife.info/ScottGates>

ASK THE ANGEL

BY RACHEL CORPUS



The holidays can feel magical and chaotic. This month, your angels share guidance on keeping your light bright, honoring your truth, and releasing what no longer serves you. These rituals and messages are here to help you move through the season with grace, joy, and love.

Dear Rachel,
The holidays feel so heavy for me. I want to feel joy, but my light feels dim. How can I get into the holiday spirit when I am in such a dark place?
Holding On,
Marissa Portland, OR

Dear Marissa,
Your angels want you to know that your light is never lost, it's only hidden under the weight of the season. To brighten your glow, try connecting with sunlight daily. Even in the winter, five to ten minutes of intentional time with the sun can remind your cells how to vibe. Visualize the golden light entering your body and imagine every cell opening to it. This practice raises your vibrational frequency, making it easier for joy to return. Let this be your secret ritual: receive the light, become the light, share the light.
Vibin' High,
Rachel, the Angel

Dear Rachel,
*This year has been challenging. I don't want to carry all this heavy energy into 2026. How can I let some of this bull*hit go?*
Ready to Release,
Tanya Knoxville, TN
Dear Tanya,

Same, Goddess, same! And I don't think we are the only ones feeling this way! The angels suggest a ritual of release and renewal that's a little different this year:
Sound Clearing Ritual: Speak aloud what you're letting go of, then ring a bell, chime, or even snap your fingers with intention. The vibration breaks up old energy, scattering it back into the Universe, leaving space for new blessings.

Dear Rachel,
I used to love Christmas, but now I doubt my faith and the existence of a God. How can I celebrate without feeling fake?

Searching,
Daniel Dublin, Ireland
Dear Daniel,

First, know this: doubt is not a sign of weakness, but of expansion. The angels show me that when you question, you're really clearing space for a more personal relationship with the Divine. You don't need a priest, guru, or old story to help you know God. You are made of your Creator. That connection can never be lost, only redefined. Celebrate by leaning into what still feels sacred to you—light a candle, share kindness, honor love in all forms. Christmas can be about connection, not doctrine. Let your celebrations reflect who you are becoming. And let what makes sense to you now take root.
Searching Too,
Rachel, the Angel

Closing Blessing from Rachel:

As you step into this holiday season, remember that you are light, love, and creation itself. Your angels walk beside you in every celebration, every question, and every goodbye to the past. May the end of this year be your opening to a brighter, freer, more love-filled 2026.
Connect with Rachel Corpus:
<https://bestholisticlife.info/RachelCorpus>

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Best Holistic Life



THE *Missing Piece* OF Holistic Health: RECONNECTING WITH YOUR FEMININE ENERGY

BY PARINAZ SHAMS

You've tried the diets, the workouts, the meditation apps, and even the stress hacks—and yet, something still feels off. Maybe your body is healthier, but your spirit feels restless. Maybe your mind is sharper, but your heart still feels heavy.

That's because true holistic health isn't just about what you eat, how much you move, or how well you manage stress. It's also about the energy you live from every day. And for many high-achieving women, that missing piece is feminine energy.

THE QUIET COST OF HIGH ACHIEVEMENT

From an early age, many of us are taught to push, perform, and achieve. We learn to be competitive, to have it all figured out, and to stay one step ahead. And while this conditioning may bring us success to an extent, it often comes with a hidden cost: we harden ourselves to survive.

Softness, receptivity, and intuition start to feel like luxuries we can't afford. We become efficient machines, but exhausted humans. The very qualities that make us feel alive, connected, and creative get buried under layers of “toughness.”



The result? Burnout, anxiety, strained relationships, and a constant sense that something is missing, even when everything looks good on the outside.

REDEFINING FEMININE ENERGY

Here's what I want you to know: reclaiming your feminine energy is not weakness. It's not passivity. And it's certainly not about fitting into outdated gender roles.

Feminine energy is about connection—to yourself, to others, and to life. It's about intuition, creativity, and receptivity. It's the ability to soften without losing strength, to be guided as much as you guide, and to feel as much as you think.

When we suppress this part of ourselves, we disconnect from our own wholeness. But when we reclaim it, we find a sense of vitality and aliveness that no diet, no supplement, and no achievement can give us.

PRACTICAL WAYS TO RECONNECT

You don't need a drastic life overhaul to begin reconnecting with your feminine energy. You can start small:

Create moments of softness. Instead of powering through your day, take three slow breaths before your next meeting. Let your shoulders drop. Let yourself feel.

Engage your creativity. Cook, dance, journal, and paint—not for productivity, but simply for the joy of expression.

Listen inward. The next time you feel anxious or restless, ask yourself, “What do I really need right now?” Then honor the answer, even if it's inconvenient.

Practice receptivity. Instead of giving all the time, practice receiving compliments, help, and rest. Notice where you resist, and soften there.

WHOLENESS IS THE GOAL

Holistic health isn't about becoming someone else. It's about reclaiming all of who you already are. The strength, the ambition, the drive—and the softness, the intuition, the creativity.

When you integrate both, you don't just “manage stress” or “avoid burnout.” You come alive. And that aliveness is the truest form of health.

So the next time you feel like something's missing, look beyond the usual fixes. Ask yourself: Have I been honoring my feminine energy?

You might just find that it was the missing piece all along.

Connect with Parinaz Shams: <https://bestholisticlife.info/ParinazShams>



THE GREATEST OBSTACLES IN TREATING LYME DISEASE COMPLEX

BY DR. DANIEL WARREN



What is Lyme Disease Complex? Lyme Disease is an illness specifically caused by exposure to one or more species within the family of infections called *Borrelia*. It can affect almost every aspect of the body and is therefore extremely variable in how it presents symptomatically. *Borrelia* rarely acts alone, however, and often, the term Lyme Disease gets used to describe the many factors that contribute to the symptoms associated with chronic tick-borne illness. To remedy this common mischaracterization, it is more appropriate to use the term “Lyme Disease Complex.”

Lyme Disease Complex is the consequence of a long-term immunocompromised state and the subsequent effect of the cumulative exposure of other infections and environmental toxicities. Lyme Disease Complex is therefore chronic in nature, and most people affected by this have a multitude of root causative factors that synergistically cause marked dysfunction in several of their body systems.

TREATING MULTIPLE ROOT CAUSATIVE FACTORS

In order to effectively create a long-term healing response, it is vital to address all of the root causative factors involved. The first step in doing this is utilizing the right testing to identify these variables. Conventional Lyme testing has a very high chance of false negatives, so alternative testing is key. Likewise, testing for other concomitant infections and toxicities is vital as well. Once all of the contributing factors are identified, effective treatment strategies must be employed to resolve them. Typically, treating all of the root causes simultaneously yields better results.

Infiltrating The Infection's Hideout

Species within the *Borrelia* family are some of the most difficult infections to treat due to where they take refuge in the body. After initial exposure, *Borrelia* typically migrates to the central nervous system (CNS), which makes it very challenging for the immune system to combat due to the effectiveness of the blood-brain barrier (BBB). Most antibiotics have a hard time crossing the BBB, making most conventional treatment options less effective as well. This is often why patients who undergo antibiotic protocols alone will have minimal long-term improvement and/or transient improvement. Advanced strategies to penetrate the BBB safely and effectively allow access into the CNS. This subsequently leads to the elimination of the actual reservoir of infection, which is key to long-term success with the disease.

BEING SUFFICIENTLY AGGRESSIVE, WITHOUT BEING TOO AGGRESSIVE

A phenomenon that many Lyme patients are familiar with is called a Herxheimer reaction. This occurs when there is a release of endotoxins due to a large amount of infectious die-off. Inflammation is produced as a result, and the body responds by producing cytokines, which often leads to a worsening of chronic symptoms. Every patient has a different level of tolerability, and it is vital not to surpass this threshold. In order to achieve this, it is necessary to simultaneously detoxify while eliminating the infectious burden. This makes treatment more tolerable and therefore sustainable. There are many effective ways to detoxify the body, but the most effective strategies target the main channels of elimination, which include the liver, kidneys, and lymphatic system.

ANOTHER REASON WHY DETOXIFICATION IS KEY

Lyme Disease Complex typically causes a multitude of symptoms that affect several systems of the body. These symptoms significantly impact the affected individual's quality of life. The symptoms are directly caused by the toxins released by the associated infections and arise as a result of inflammation and damage to healthy tissues. There are several types of toxins that infections can produce, and each toxin type has an affinity for different bodily systems. This is why Lyme Disease Complex can present so variably from person to person.

Eliminating the infections is only the first step of the healing process. In order to experience true symptom relief, it is vital to expel these toxins from the body. Therefore, detoxification is not only important to mitigate Herxheimer reactions to make treatment tolerable, but it is also key to seeing an improvement in symptoms. Typically, patients who have the best results not only incorporate detoxification during the anti-infectious stage of treatment but also complete a post-anti-infectious detoxification protocol. That is often when the true symptomatic improvement occurs.

COMPROMISED DETOXIFICATION PATHWAYS

Another challenge that is a common occurrence with patients who have Lyme Disease Complex is impaired detoxification pathways. This is because the toxins the

infections produce, combined with the environmental toxicities that generally accumulate, are typically overwhelming for the detox organs. Additionally, inflammation causes the lymphatic system to become sluggish, which slows down detoxification as well. As a result, it can be difficult for a person to effectively eliminate. As stated earlier, this can exacerbate Herxheimer reactions and reduce the elimination of toxins, which is necessary for symptomatic improvement. Methods to maximize detoxification function, as well as bypass these compromised channels of elimination, are therefore vital in many cases.

HOW TO APPROACH MORE SENSITIVE INDIVIDUALS

There are many factors that dictate the level of sensitivity that a person with Lyme Disease Complex has. It is important to identify these more sensitive individuals because often they require a less aggressive approach. This typically requires a slower anti-infectious protocol due to more intensive Herxheimer reactions. Subsequently, these individuals often necessitate a more robust detoxification protocol to mitigate this response. In many cases, these individuals have a concomitant diagnosis like Mast Cell Activation Syndrome, which causes abnormal allergic reactions and can magnify that level of sensitivity. Although there are tools that can be utilized to minimize these reactions, the best way to treat these associated diagnoses is to treat the underlying root causes of the disease. To do so, however, the practitioner must have the right tools and the knowledge to use them effectively.

THERE IS HOPE

Lyme Disease Complex is a very challenging disease to treat. This is especially true for those individuals who have widespread dysfunction that has accumulated over many years. It is easy to lose hope with this disease when most people spend their lives searching for answers and live in agony every single day. However, with the right diagnostic tools, an appropriate treatment strategy, and precise technology, it is not only possible but probable for most individuals to have a long-term healing response. In other words, there is always hope. Healing happens.



OVERWHELMED? OVEREXTENDED?

OVER IT? HOW TUNING INWARD CAN HEAL YOUR HOLIDAYS

BY KRISTINE GENOVESE

The holidays are supposed to be joyful—but let's be honest, they often come with a heavy side of “extra.” Extra obligations. Extra travel. Extra shopping, cooking, cleaning, and planning. And with that comes extra stress, anxiety, cortisol, and emotion. We get so caught up in doing that we forget about being.

As we wrap gifts and calendars, we often leave the most important package unopened: ourselves.

Earlier this year, I had the privilege of attending a weeklong meditation intensive with one of my mentors, Dr. Joe Dispenza. Going in, I thought I knew what meditation was. I have a daily morning practice: 15 minutes of prayer, 30 minutes of stillness, journaling my insights, and sipping coffee while gazing at the trees. I was sure this retreat would be an extended version of that.

It wasn't.

The setting was gorgeous—Marco Island, Florida, with its white sand beaches and dreamy sunsets—but what I experienced was far beyond a relaxing getaway.

I had no idea what I was truly walking into.

First clue? The required 30-hour online prep course. Second? The complete absence of a daily schedule. All they gave us was a start time—6:00 PM Friday—and an end time—2:00 PM Thursday. No beach plans were being made. This wasn't a spa day for the soul. It was a quantum-level initiation.

This was transcendent.

This was immersive.

This was full-on energetic recalibration.

We were up before dawn, meditating by 6 AM, followed by profound teachings on quantum physics, epigenetics, neuroscience, and the measurable impact of meditation on the body. We saw scientific data, heard testimonies, and experienced the undeniable connection between mind, emotion, and physical healing.

We were weaving ancient wisdom with modern science.

And what I learned changed everything.

When you truly go inward—when you let the outer world fade and fully surrender to the present moment—you begin to access a powerful field of infinite potential: the quantum field.

This was not relaxation. This was evolution.

I learned how diving into the inner world—while intentionally turning down the noise of the external one—can rewire your biology. The key? A clear intention in a calm, coherent brain paired with an elevated emotion like joy, love, or gratitude in a coherent heart. That's how you move from living in the past to creating a new future.

But here's the truth: most of us live in survival mode. A constant state of chaos—mentally and emotionally. We're ever-present in fight, flight, freeze, or fawn. Our nervous systems are maxed out. We multitask everything, rarely fully present with ourselves or anyone else. Our brains fire chaotically, our hearts race, and we are anything but aligned.

And where your attention goes, your energy flows.

If you're perpetually focused on your outer world—your to-do list, your problems, your obligations—then you're giving all your energy away. There's nothing left for the inner world. You become stuck in a loop, thinking the same thoughts, feeling the same feelings, reacting the same way. You keep reinforcing the same personal reality, and eventually, your environment begins to shape your personality.

In Dr. Joe's words, "Your personality is no longer creating your reality—your personal reality is creating your personality."

The science backs it up. Your thoughts and emotions create an electromagnetic signature that broadcasts into the field and shapes every area of your life. But if you're living in a habitual state of stress—flooded with adrenaline and cortisol—your brain and body are locked in survival mode. You become hyper-focused on the material world, always scanning for "danger." You lose your ability to create, to dream, to heal.

And here's where things get even more real: e-motion is energy in motion. When that energy becomes stagnant—when it gets trapped in the body instead of flowing through it—it manifests as dis-ease. Physical illness, pain, or chronic conditions originate from this stuck energy.

This is exactly where the Soul Intelligence® Method comes in.

Soul Intelligence® is a revolutionary bioenergetic process designed to clear blocked emotions and stored trauma—whether they're hiding in your physical body, your subconscious mind, or your energetic field. In just one session, clients often experience massive energetic shifts, emotional release, and deep nervous system resets. This holiday season, what if your greatest gift wasn't under the tree—but inside of you?

If you're ready to stop running on fumes, to reconnect with your true self, and to experience peace in a way you never thought possible, Soul Intelligence® is the tool you've been waiting for.

And if you're feeling called to go deeper—to not only heal but facilitate healing for others—consider becoming a certified NEHP (Neuro-Energetic Health Practitioner). You'll learn advanced techniques that reset the nervous system, release trapped emotions, and help others align mind, body, and spirit.

This new year, don't just make resolutions. Make real change. Join the Soul Intelligence® movement—where healing is fast, real, and sacred because self-care isn't selfish. It's a revolutionary act.

Learn more or book your first Soul Intelligence® session at www.soulintelligencemethod.com.





Susan Shatzer

Transforming LOVE INTO GRACE

BY SUSAN SHATZER

It was an early Saturday morning, chilly. I stood in my kitchen, cradling a lukewarm cup of coffee, tears quietly slipping down my cheeks. My partner had said something offhand—nothing cruel, just careless—and it landed in my chest like a stone. I wanted to snap back.

Instead, I took a long, steady breath, stepped outside, and settled into the quiet of our oceanfront balcony. The wind, the waves, the stillness—it was all there, waiting.

Then, from somewhere deep within, I heard it:

“Give what you need most.”

That simple whisper cracked me open.

I needed tenderness.

I needed understanding.

I needed grace.

So, I gave it.

And that moment changed everything.

Love May Begin the Story... but it's grace that writes the chapters we never saw coming.

Love is the spark—beautiful, bright, and sometimes fleeting. Grace, on the other hand, is what helps love endure. It's the soft light we bring into moments that challenge us. The compassion we extend when our instincts tell us to pull away. It's what turns love from a feeling into a force for healing.

What Is Grace, Really?

Grace isn't passive. It's not the same as letting things slide or pretending everything's okay. Grace is active. It's the conscious choice to bring compassion, forgiveness, and presence into difficult moments—especially when it's hard.

Psychologist Dr. Kristin Neff, a pioneer in self-compassion research, explains that grace—expressed through kindness—activates our brain's caregiving systems. These systems calm our stress response and deepen our sense of connection, both to others and ourselves (Neff, 2011). Grace

doesn't avoid discomfort. It meets it with open arms.

Grace Begins Within.

Most of us are far gentler with others than we are with ourselves.

You miss a deadline.

“I'm such a failure.”

You overeat on a stressful day.

“I have no discipline.”

You forgot to return a call.

“What's wrong with me?”

Sound familiar?

Studies from the University of Texas show that self-compassion—being gentle with ourselves in moments of struggle—leads to greater resilience and sustainable personal growth. We improve not by punishing ourselves, but by nurturing ourselves out of shame.

The grace you extend inward becomes the grace you naturally offer outward.

GRACE CHANGES YOUR BIOLOGY

Grace isn't just spiritually fulfilling—it's biologically smart.

When we engage in compassionate thoughts and actions, our bodies release oxytocin—a neurochemical that fosters bonding and reduces stress (Zak, 2012). This hormone lowers blood pressure and supports emotional resilience.

Even more fascinating: brain scans reveal that compassion activates the medial prefrontal cortex, a region crucial for empathy, decision-making, and emotional regulation (Singer & Klimecki, 2014). When you practice grace regularly, you're literally rewiring your brain for peace.

A PERSONAL STORY: GRACE IN REAL LIFE.

Three years ago, I experienced a painful falling out with a lifelong friend. Decades of unspoken resentments built walls between us, and for a long time, those walls felt impossible to scale.

Then came her diagnosis: early-stage dementia.

We met for lunch one afternoon, and as I watched her struggle to remember the name of her favorite dish—"omelet"—I realized something fundamental had shifted.

The woman who once remembered every birthday, every breakup, every victory of mine... couldn't find her words.

That moment could have broken me. Instead, it softened me.

I dropped my expectations of who she had been and chose to meet her exactly where she was.

I gave grace.

And in doing so, I received it.

Today, our relationship is simpler, sweeter, and more peaceful than ever. There's laughter. There's space. There's love, yes—but more than that, there's grace.

5 DAILY PRACTICES TO LIVE WITH GRACE.

You don't need a crisis to start living a graceful life. Here are five research-supported ways to bring grace into your daily life:

1. Pause Before Reacting

Before speaking, breathe. Ask yourself: "What would grace choose here?" This moment of mindfulness can defuse tension and deepen understanding (Siegel, 2010).

2. Speak Kindly to Yourself

Replace harsh self-talk with gentler alternatives: "I'm learning." "It's okay to make mistakes." This helps build resilience and reduce anxiety (Neff & Germer, 2013).

3. Repair, Don't Retaliate

When conflict arises, don't default to blame. Try: "I would like to understand." Grace fosters curiosity, not criticism.

4. Document Daily Grace

Each evening, jot down one act of grace you gave or received. This simple habit trains your brain to seek compassion, even in the midst of chaos.

5. Move with Presence

Yoga, walking, stretching—these gentle movements reconnect body and mind. Grace often enters through the body before it ever reaches the mind (Harvard Health, 2020).

From Love to Grace.

Love gets us started.

Grace carries us through.

It's not always dramatic. Sometimes grace is just a soft word, a pause, or simply showing up. Again and again. When love matures, it becomes a form of grace.

So, what might it look like to offer yourself grace—today?

Maybe it's resting without guilt.

Maybe it's apologizing without pride.

Perhaps it's simply about breathing and starting again.

Because grace, dear reader, is how we heal. ~ SusanShatzer.com

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BREATHE, RELEASE, SURRENDER: RETURNING TO THE RHYTHM OF THE CREATOR

BY ALI LEVINE

In a world that glorifies hustle, peace is not found in pushing harder but in yielding to the sacred rhythm the Creator designed. Every breath is an invitation to return to less striving, more being, and more wholeness.

BREATH AS OUR FIRST TEACHER:

Before our eyes ever open to the light of this world, we are gifted breath. It is the first evidence of life, the invisible thread connecting body, mind, and spirit.

Breath mirrors how we live:

When we cling, it shortens.

When we strive, it grows shallow.

When we soften, it deepens, filling us with presence.

This rhythm was never meant to be hijacked by stress or control. Breath is a sacred gift from the Creator, a reminder that every inhale is provision, every exhale release.

THE POWER OF SURRENDER

“Just breathe” is common advice, but true surrender runs deeper. It is pure trust, loosening our grip and letting the Creator carry what we were never meant to hold.

In a culture that praises control, surrender feels radical. Yet it is the path that leads us back to clarity, peace, and strength. Doing less regulates the nervous system, quiets the mind, and makes room for creativity and direction to rise naturally.

DOING LESS = LIVING MORE

Consider nature.

The ocean doesn’t push to prove its waves; it flows.

Trees don’t strain to grow; they lean into the light.

Seasons shift without resistance.

So why do we believe we must strive endlessly to matter?

Stillness brings us into the Creator’s design for wholeness. Doing less isn’t laziness; it is wisdom. It is honoring our limits and making space for God to lead us into what truly matters.

BREATH AS A PORTAL TO PRESENCE

Every inhale and exhale invites us back to the present. Breath is the simplest way to reset the nervous system and remember what is real.

When anxiety spikes, notice the breath.

When overwhelm comes, notice the breath.

When you find yourself forcing or hustling, pause. Inhale deeply. Exhale fully.

This rhythm interrupts striving and ushers in the peace of being.

FROM CHAOS TO CLARITY

Many chase peace through endless practices or quick fixes. But peace is not manufactured; it is in the waiting, in the simple act of breathing with intention. Inhaling what was freely given. Exhaling what you cannot carry.

The paradox is this: the less we push, the more space opens. The less we control, the more clarity comes. The less we strive, the more connected we feel to ourselves, to others, and to the Creator who holds it all.

A SACRED PRACTICE

Here's a simple way to return to the rhythm of the Creator:

1. Pause. Let go of the urge to do more.
2. Hand on your heart. Feel its steady beat.
3. Inhale for four. Whisper: Creator, fill me with Your peace.
4. Exhale for six. Release with: I surrender this to You, God. Help me let go.
5. Repeat three cycles. Notice the shift.

This is not simply "breathwork." It is a return to design. Life itself is sustained by grace, not striving.

THE INVITATION TO YOU:

Holistic wellness is more than nutrition or routines. It is body, mind, and spirit in harmony. And at its foundation is surrender.

Your breath whispers daily:

- You don't have to hold it all together.
- You don't have to hustle for your worth.
- You don't have to strive to be enough.

You were created for more, and paradoxically, it begins with less.

When you align with the sacred rhythm of the Creator, you discover the more you've been searching for all along: peace, clarity, and the truth that you are held.

CLOSING THOUGHT:

Your breath is not random. It is the sacred reminder that you are sustained, cared for, and never alone.

Surrender isn't about losing. It's about gaining what truly matters.

So the next time you catch yourself striving, remember this:

Pause. Breathe. Surrender.

Doing less isn't weakness; it's the sacred way of allowing more.

Connect with Ali: <https://linktr.ee/alilevinedesign>



STOP HOLDING BACK: HOW TO STEP INTO WHAT MAKES YOU UNIQUELY YOU

BY MARIA BALTAZZI

Think how different the world would be if Mother Teresa had not fed the hungry or cared for the poor. If Martin Luther King Jr. or Mahatma Gandhi had not rallied the courage to change the tide of nations against racism and tyranny. If Neil Armstrong had not walked on the moon. If Steven Spielberg had not re-envisioned how films are made. If Steve Jobs had not transformed how we use technology to process information, view videos, and listen to music.

What would our lives be like if these individuals had not answered their unique calling? If they had chosen a quieter existence of doing only what was required—working, coming home, eating dinner, watching television, and repeating the cycle until years slipped by in quiet frustration? The world would have been left without the imprint of their Love—Love for humanity, for truth, for exploration, for storytelling, for innovation. That Love, whether they named it or not, was the fuel that set everything else into motion.

The same choice rests with you. As the year comes to a close, love yourself enough to live out what makes you uniquely you and plan to fully embrace in the new year.

LISTENING TO YOUR CALL

We are all called differently and at different times. Some answer a call to serve their country, protect communities, or open minds. Others find it in raising children to be kind and productive human beings. The invitation is the same: to stop living a life of quiet desperation and instead listen deeply for the desire inside you.

Some people find their path early, while many of us take a longer route filled with detours. What matters less is when you discover it and more that you do. The sooner you shape your vision, the sooner you create meaning. Delay keeps you circling in regret, resentment, or apathy. Acting on your vision moves you toward satisfaction and peace.

Research confirms this. People who find meaning in their lives report stronger relationships, healthier habits, greater prosperity, better sleep, longer lives, and a higher baseline of happiness.

FROM INSPIRATION TO ACTION

The great names of history were born as you were—naked, crying, and placed into a world of possibilities. The difference was their choice to embrace a vision and pursue it. That choice is available to you right now. You may not start the next global company or direct a Hollywood blockbuster film, yet you can create something that matters to you and to those around you.

Today, you carry powerful tools in your back pocket. You can film stories on your phone, connect with mentors and communities online, and learn skills once locked inside university halls. Resources surround you, yet the most powerful one is already inside—your desire to create the life you envision.

EMBRACING WHAT MAKES YOU UNIQUELY YOU

Pause and Listen

Set aside quiet time each day, even just ten minutes, to ask yourself: What truly matters to me? Write down what comes up without judgment. Over time, patterns will emerge that reveal your deeper calling.

Define Your Desires

Instead of vague wishes, clarify specifics. Write, “I want to publish a memoir,” not “I want to write more.” Concrete desires are easier to act upon.

Start Where You Are

You do not need the perfect plan to begin. Use the tools at hand. If Spielberg started with his father’s 8mm camera, you can start with your phone today. Take one small step, whether recording a video, sketching an idea, or enrolling in a local class.

Transform Regret Into Fuel

If you feel years have passed without progress, reframe it. Ask, What have I learned in this time that equips me to act now?

Turn the weight of regret into momentum forward.

Surround Yourself With Encouragement

Seek out people who believe in your potential. Community

strengthens resolve. Share your goals with a supportive friend or mentor who can hold you accountable.

Celebrate Small Wins

Acknowledge progress, no matter how modest. Each step lifts your confidence and keeps your vision alive.

THE INVITATION

Your unique calling does not have to change the entire world. It needs only to change your world and, by extension, those you touch. Do not wait for the perfect timing or flawless conditions.

Begin with the Love you already have inside and act from there.

Mother Teresa, Gandhi, King, Armstrong, Spielberg, and Jobs each began with a decision to show up. They were not guaranteed success, only given the same choice you have today. What would it look like if you embraced what makes you uniquely you? The answer is waiting. Use this month to honor that question and step into the new year ready to live as the fullest version of yourself.

This article includes an excerpt from my debut book, *Take a Shot at Happiness: How to Write, Direct & Produce the Life You Want*, which reached Amazon's #1 Bestseller list in the Creativity Self-Help category and was an Eric Hoffer Literary Award Finalist. It was voted "Best Personal Development Book of the Year 2024" and received the "2025 Leader of the Year" award from this magazine.

The book has won thirteen prestigious awards, including the Silver Nautilus Book Award and multiple category honors from the NYC Big Book Awards, National Indie Excellence Awards, Best Book Award, and the Independent Press Award. It was also featured in Times Square, New York.

Connect with Maria Baltazzi:

<https://bestholisticlife.info/MariaBaltazzi>





MOON MAGIC – FULL MOON AND NEW MOON TAROT INSIGHTS FOR DECEMBER 2025

BY LISA KESSLER

Welcome and step into the moonlight with me. The moon's rhythm offers a sacred invitation to pause, reflect, release, and begin anew. As 2025 winds down and the nights grow longer, December's moon phases provide a unique blend of introspection and forward momentum.

The Full Moon in Gemini illuminates the culmination of cycles in thought, communication, and connection, encouraging us to honor the lessons we've gathered and release what no longer serves our growth. Meanwhile, the New Moon

in Sagittarius opens a gateway to fresh possibilities, inviting adventurous thinking, expansive dreams, and alignment with our most authentic truths.

This month, the moon and your intuition are guiding you to both clear away the old and step boldly into what's next. Let's explore the messages and insights waiting to help you release, reflect, and carry forward your intentions as the year draws to a close.

FULL MOON IN GEMINI – DECEMBER 4, 2025

Taurus brings grounded, nurturing energy rooted in the physical and spiritual world. Aligned with The Hierophant in tarot, this Full Moon invites you to reconnect with the rituals, beliefs, and traditions that bring you comfort and meaning. It's a time to slow down, reflect, and honor the practices and people who support your growth. Let this full moon be a reminder to cultivate inner peace through structure, stability, and heartfelt gratitude.

Gemini is an air sign full of curiosity and intellect. Associated with The Lovers card in tarot, this moon calls us to see both sides of a situation before making important decisions. This is a powerful time for expanding our thinking and pushing the boundaries of our knowledge.

The Full Moon offers a sacred time for emotional liberation and fresh ideas. Release old patterns and allow your curiosity to lead the way.

TAROT SPREAD:



Card #1 – Current challenges we're facing?

Ten of Cups – The Ten signals the completion of a cycle, and Cups symbolize our emotions. The challenge now is to expand your capacity for love, especially toward yourself. With Gemini's rational energy at play, remember to consult both your mind and your heart before making choices.



Card #2 – Creative Solutions to break free

The Empress – Clarify your long-term dreams and keep taking aligned steps toward them in order to overcome any personal doubts. The Empress reminds us that abundance is born from both patience and nurturing action. Expect the best outcomes as your vision takes root.



Card #3 – What requires a deeper look?

The Tower – Change is uncomfortable, but transformation rarely happens without it. Instead of resisting the storm, release your fear and trust that the momentary chaos is clearing space for your growth and evolution.

Affirmation:

"I release outdated patterns and welcome change, knowing it leads me to greater love, wisdom, and freedom."

Journaling Prompt:

Where am I resisting necessary change, and how might embracing it open new possibilities in my life?

NEW MOON IN SAGITTARIUS – DECEMBER 19, 2025

This New Moon in fiery Sagittarius invites us to re-envision our path forward—perfect timing as 2025 draws to a close. Looking ahead to 2026, this moon urges us to dream boldly, align with truth, and begin weaving our higher vision into reality.

The fresh start of the New Moon welcomes us to reignite passion and set intentions that expand our horizons. What seeds are you ready to plant for the coming year? Clarity of purpose will reveal the path and illuminate your next steps.

TAROT SPREAD:



Card #1 – Blessings from 2025

Knight of Wands – You charged forward with courage and passion this year, even when the plan wasn’t fully mapped out. Reflect on your accomplishments, there’s momentum to build upon in 2026.

December’s moonlight reminds us that every ending carries the spark of a new beginning. The Gemini Full Moon helps us release outdated thoughts, mental clutter, and limiting patterns, creating space for clarity and insight. Following this, the Sagittarius New Moon encourages us to dream bigger, embrace adventure, celebrate connection, and set intentions that reflect our most authentic self.

As 2025 comes to a close, this is the perfect moment to reflect on what you’ve learned, honor the growth you’ve experienced, and prepare for the new opportunities on the horizon. If you’d like to deepen your manifesting journey for 2026, discover your unique strengths and how to work with them by taking my free Manifesting Archetype Quiz.

Step into the new year with intention, clarity, and gratitude, knowing you are fully equipped to embrace the magic, abundance, and transformation that await.

Connect with Lisa Kessler: <https://linktr.ee/metaphysicalmanifesting>



Card #2 – How to prepare for 2026

Judgement – This is a call to step into your soul’s true purpose. Beyond everyday responsibilities, how can you expand your light in service of the world? Aligning your goals with this calling will empower your year ahead.



Card #3 – What seeds are you planting?

Three of Cups – Celebrate connection. Whether through deepening bonds with loved ones or expanding your circle, remember that shared joy is fertile ground for growth.

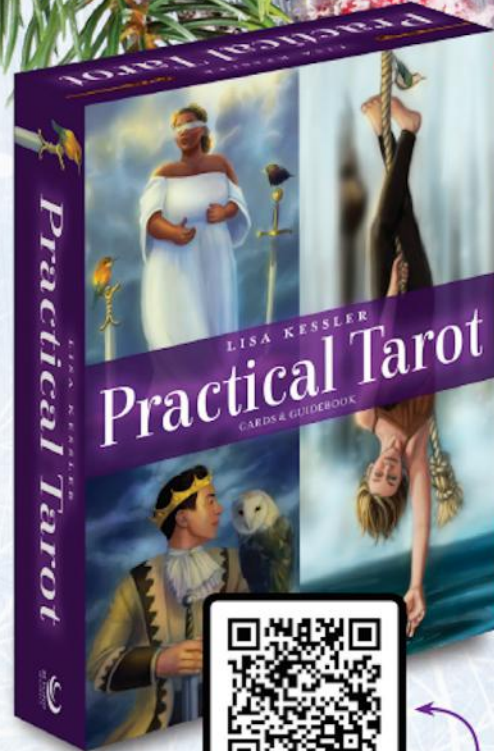
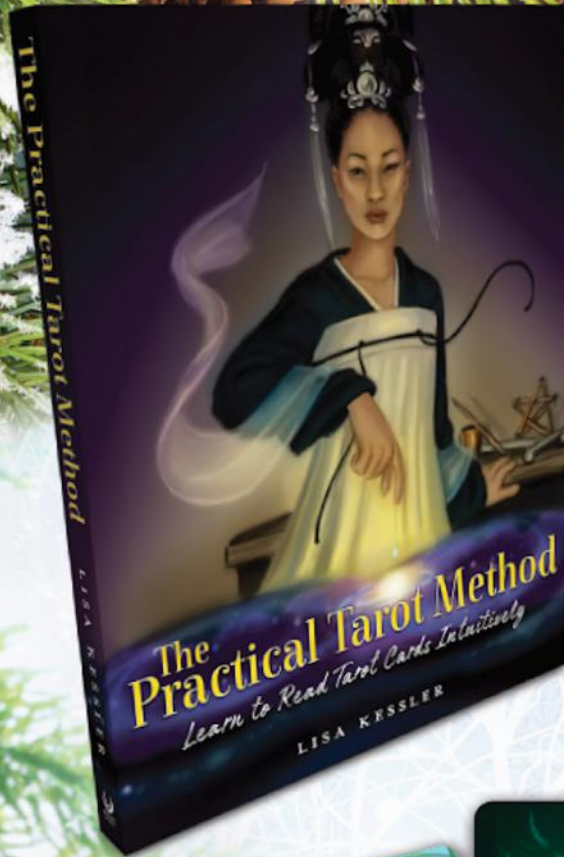
Affirmation:

“I boldly plant seeds of joy, adventure, and purpose, knowing my dreams will flourish in divine timing.”

Journaling Prompt:

What vision for my life excites me most for 2026, and how can I invite more joy and connection into the journey?





Buy Now



Four of Pentacles



Ace of Cups



Wheel of Fortune



Two of Cups



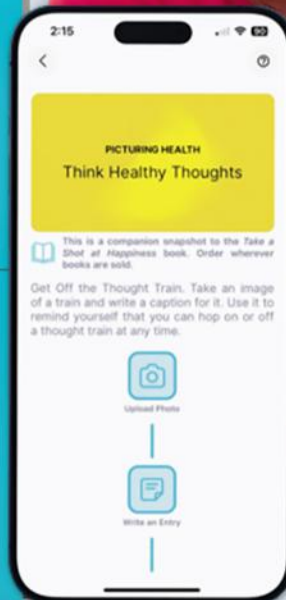
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