

# *The Greatness That Is Within...*

*A Guided Journey for My Sisters  
Cynthia F. Reaves*



# Dedication

*This planner is dedicated to my sisters.*

*You who have inspired me, guided me and supported me in my ongoing journey to be... to be a better person... to be more centered in my approach to life... to be at peace... to know that I am enough as I am. You taught me that life is a continual cycle of challenge, break-through, and achievement. As I move forward, I collect lessons from each of you that inspire me to be a better person... a better human... to manage and transcend set backs with energy and vigor.*

*Let us use this as a guide to support each other and to grow together. To learn from each other and to move forward toward a more perfect version of who we aspire to be...better women, better partners, better daughters, better family members, better teachers of the young people God has blessed in our lives...and better sisters to each other...*

*Let us pledge to use this tool to start on a journey to the better self that we each desire to be for our own benefit. We make this pledge to ourselves and to each other to stand as witness in support of the person that we each want to be... moving forward to achieve the goals that we design for ourselves. Holding each other accountable to make ourselves a priority in and unto ourselves—with no shame, regret, or compromise... for we cannot guide, assist and inspire those we love unless and until we tend to our own aspirations.*

*This journal is organized to help you to set goals for yourself for the year and to serve as a witness to help your sisters to set and reach their goals. Let us commit to each other to set our own goals and help our sister achieve her goals... and if we fall short, let us commit to stand ready to pick each other up and inspire one another to try again and to never give up.*

*I love you.*

*Cynthia*



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## How to use this planner...

A planner should be a benefit, not a burden, so this planner seeks to advance you toward your goals without being a burden. For this reason, this planner is designed to be reviewed and updated once or twice a month. However, certain activities should be undertaken on a daily basis and become daily **Rituals for Better Living** (see discussion to the right). Strive for balance between daily and periodic activities.

### How to Start...

**Find a Witness** or two (or three)...sisters who will encourage you to stay faithful to your goals (p. 1). Your witness must be someone willing to commit to you!

**Next, Do the Work:** The bulk of the work that is done in this planner is done at the beginning. First, **create a vision** for yourself for the year (pp. 2-3). **Decorate your vision pages** with quotes or photos of what "success" looks like for you. Second, **identify your focus and theme** for the year and **develop your target goals** (pp. 4-5). There are six target areas that you can focus upon, but by no means should you feel that you must develop goals in those target areas. Choose target goals that resonate with you and feel free to create others if any of the listed ones don't work for you. Next, you will see separate pages (pp. 6-13) for you to **develop each target**. Think about your goal for that area and write down the 2 or 3 strategic steps that you will take to reach that goal. It is important for you to think of realistic steps and be willing to take those first steps. Please be flexible with your strategic steps because fate has a way of stepping in and rearranging your plans! You may take different steps and still achieve your goals! The last step in goal development is to identify your end results—the vision of what successful goal accomplishment will look like. End results are your vision of the tangible evidence that lets you know that you have achieved your goal. Finally, at the **beginning of each month** (pp. 14-37) write down your **monthly goals and activities** and what you want to accomplish. Make an action plan for success and, at month's end, assess your progress towards your goals. Throughout the year, **list your milestone achievements** (p. 38) and at year end, **assess your year** and your goal achievement (p. 39).

### Index Templates

At the back of this planner are three templates for you to use to meet your goals (pp 40-42). The **Health, Fitness and Meal Planning** template is a one-week report of your daily caloric intake, water intake and physical activity. The **Monthly Budget** template helps you to track your finances on a monthly basis by reporting your income and expenses. In tracking these items, you will be able to identify opportunities to save money. The **Relationship Grid** helps you to develop a plan to improve important relationships with family and friends.

Copy the Index Templates and use them as needed. Other helpful templates will be added over time. Template copies can be downloaded in the **Bookstore** at [www.jgapress.com](http://www.jgapress.com).

## RITUALS FOR BETTER LIVING

Certain activities should be incorporated into your daily routine. These activities are designed to help you to live a better, more emotionally balanced, life. Commit to undertaking these activities, on the suggested schedule (daily or weekly), for one month. After a month, they should become routine for you and should help you to live a better life.

### Daily Rituals

**Mediate each morning.** Center your mind and prepare yourself for the day ahead. Consider what you need to accomplish during the day and prepare yourself to meet those challenges!

**Eat to live. Do not live to eat.** Work to have a balanced diet and take steps to plan meals which are healthy. Try to avoid putting yourself in a position where you must "rush" to prepare a meal, since meal choices under those circumstances tend to be unhealthy for you.

**Hydrate.** Drink lots of water and increase your daily intake.

**Big bigger. Be gracious. Be better.** People will hurt and disappoint you. Try to avoid receiving these disappointments as personal affronts, learn to make allowances for the shortcomings of those who have hurt you and move on. Harboring anger takes you away from your goals. While you should express your concerns and disappointment to the person, stewing on those issues and harboring resentment, after the fact, is not productive.

**Laugh.** Find the joy in others and in the irony that arises in your life. Be willing to laugh with others. Be willing to laugh at yourself. Practice humility.

**Organize and prioritize your tasks for the next day.** As you prepare for bed, think about what you need to accomplish the next day. Mentally prepare yourself for what must be done!

**Practice Gratitude.** Each night before you go to sleep, think of five things that happened that day for which you are grateful. Focus on a variety of blessings! Recognizing your blessings will improve your outlook and disposition!

### Weekly Rituals

**Mind your money.** Tally your receipts for the week. Track your spending and identify ways that you can save. Use the Financial template to track your money.

**Exercise.** Incorporate exercise as part of your weekly rituals. While a daily exercise routine is not necessary, try to incorporate exercise at least three times a week and build exercise opportunities into your daily routine.

# Can I get a Witness?

**“If you want to go fast, go alone. If you want to go far, go together...”**

**African Proverb**

*My witnesses who will inspire and guide me on this journey:*



Find your “truth-sayers”...sisters who will motivate you, support you and encourage you to live your best life by reaching for your goals. These dreamkeepers are women who promise to stay by your side during your journey, pick you up when you stumble and remind you of the greatness and divinity that is within you. They will invest in your goal to move forward. This sister-friend will be your witness to success. Ask your dreamkeepers sign in to pledge their support to you and share an inspirational and motivational thought above to start you off!

# Target Goal: \_\_\_\_\_

**Annual Goal for This Target:**

**Strategic Steps to Achieve this Goal:** What are some steps that you can take to achieve the goal. While, the steps taken to achieve the goal might change, the purpose is to achieve your goals. For now, list a few steps that you envision need to be taken to meet your goal.

1. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**End Results:** If the goal is achieved, how will you know? What is happening (behaviors, results) that indicates that you have worked toward meeting this target?

# January Goals

This Month I will . . .

- ✧ \_\_\_\_\_
- ✧ \_\_\_\_\_
- ✧ \_\_\_\_\_
- ✧ \_\_\_\_\_
- ✧ \_\_\_\_\_
- ✧ \_\_\_\_\_

For the next month, I want to . . .

I want to make this happen because . . . (How does this relate to your goals?)

Are there any specific activities happening this month that you must work into your action plan? What are they and what's your plan?

**My plan of action is . . .** (What specifically will you do to get this done?)

**Reflect + Celebrate** (Complete at the end of the month.) Did you accomplish your objectives for the month? Do you need more time to achieve your objectives for the month? What needs to carry over to next month?



## **Achievements for the Year**

Throughout the year, record your achievements in this section of the planner. Include enough detail to learn from your success so that you can make it happen again.

**Achievement No. 1**

**Date:**

**Achievement No. 2**

**Date:**

**Achievement No. 3**

**Date:**

**Achievement No. 4**

**Date:**

**Achievement No. 5**

**Date:**

# The Year In Review

In order to make next year even more amazing, it helps to take inventory of the last year. By reflecting upon what went well, and what didn't, you can gain valuable insights to help you with what's to come.

**What was the BEST thing that happened this year?**

**What accomplishment are you the MOST proud of?**

**What Goals did you achieve?**

**Were there things that you wanted to do but didn't?**

# Love yourself first!

Because that is who you will be spending  
the rest of your life with!

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