

THIS BOOK BELONGS TO



THE NEW YOU is a life coach for special people.

For you!

Fill it with life and it will change your life. It will encourage you to follow your dreams, to think more about who you are, what you are capable of, and what you want from life. This book will help you take a step-by-step approach to finding your own happiness and living the life you truly want to lead.

If you have any questions or feedback:

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Your source for daily inspiration, newsletter
and downloadable exercises.

THE NEW YOU

*Nothing will change until
you change yourself – and then
everything will change.*

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*“Whatever you can do, or
dream you can do, begin it.
Boldness has genius,
power, and magic in it.”*

Johann Wolfgang von Goethe

FOREWORD

No matter where you find yourself today, you can change your life for the positive! You can do great things if you believe in yourself and overcome your own hurdles.

In various situations in my life, I kept coming back to the same two questions: “What do I really want?” and “How can I lead a life that is fulfilling and makes me happy?”. The search for answers led me toward mindfulness, neuroscience, and the power of thought. Through my training as a human therapy professional, I became more and more convinced that you can only change the life you lead if you first change yourself. And you can’t do that unless you change your way of thinking. I believe in the power of thought, and in the inner strength and positive energy within every single one of us. I am certain that we can achieve anything we set our sights on, provided we do not let our inner critic get the upper hand or lose sight of our aims. I would like to share my knowledge and experience and help people like you discover who they really are. I want to show you how you can live in harmony with your true self. That’s why I developed THE NEW YOU.

Your life is the most valuable thing you have. But life as such sometimes gets in the way of living the life you’ve dreamed of. Responsibilities, challenges, expectations, and habits often stop you from focusing on what is truly important to you.

Something will have led you to this book. There are no coincidences in life and there is a good reason why you are holding this book in your hand right now. So, let’s take a journey of self-discovery and clarity together. Find out what you really want, what’s holding you back, and how to let go of self-imposed limitations and find your true self. Following your own path and making the life you’ve always dreamed of a reality is a gift to yourself. There’s no one perfect life, but there is a life that is perfect for you.

I dedicate this book to YOU because you believe in your beautiful dreams, hopes, desires and goals, and you want to bring them to life.

I wish you every success on this wonderful path toward change.

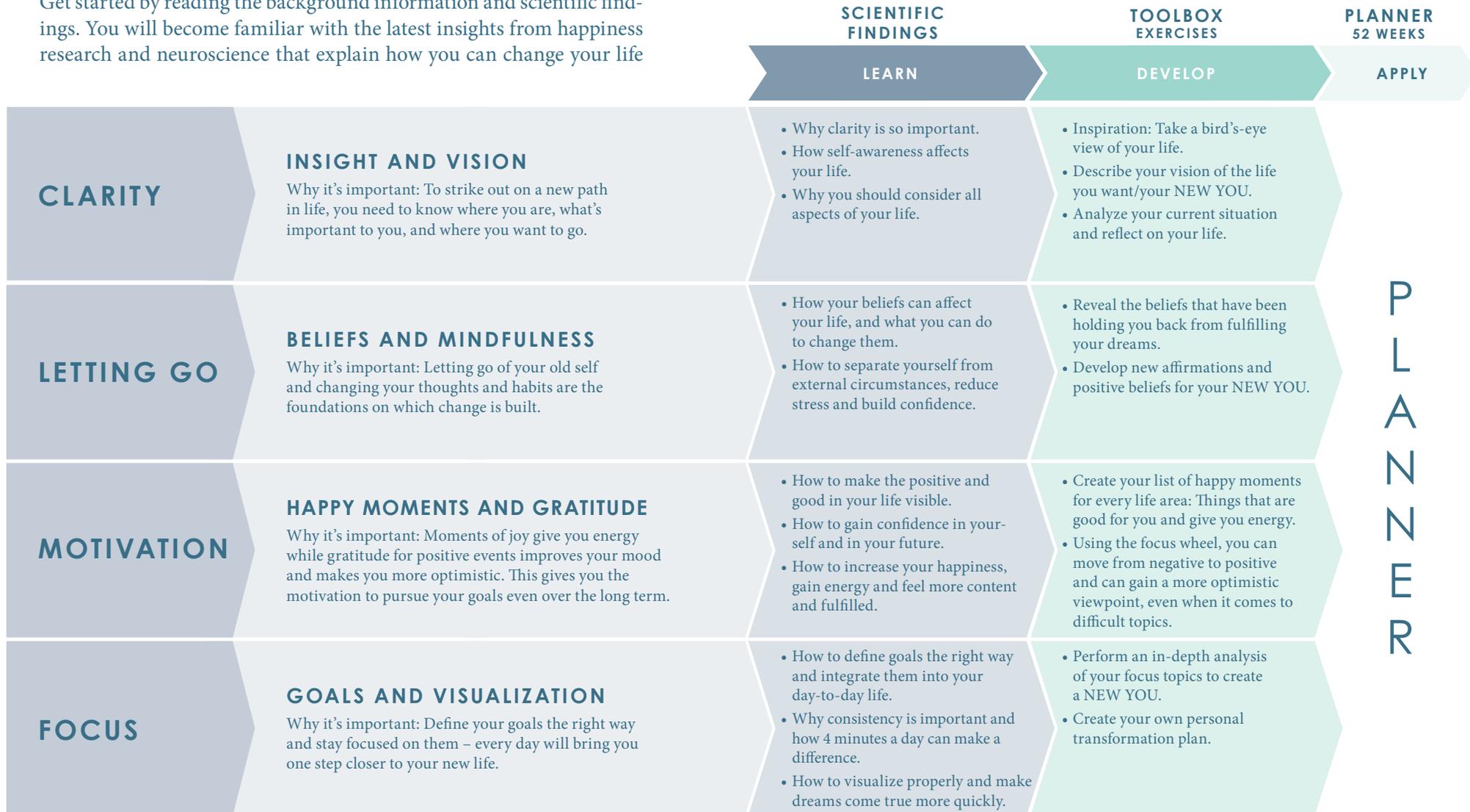
Iris Reiche

HOW IT WORKS

THE NEW YOU is designed to let you work on individual areas, such as your self-confidence. It can also be used to give your life a complete makeover. After all, the same four aspects should be considered for any change in life: clarity, letting go, motivation, and focus.

Get started by reading the background information and scientific findings. You will become familiar with the latest insights from happiness research and neuroscience that explain how you can change your life

for the better by using specific techniques. You can treat this section as your reference work. Read it two or three times and you will probably find that you gain new insights from it each time. Put what you have learned into practice and develop your own personal toolbox. The planner will then help you to integrate this into your day-to-day life and to make this into a new habit.



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*“The biggest adventure
you can take is to live
the life of your dreams.”*

Oprah Winfrey

1

SCIENTIFIC
FINDINGS

THE SCIENCE OF HAPPINESS

Everything you do, avoid, wish for, or work toward in life is all for one, deeper reason: You believe that it will make you happier. Whether it's a relationship, a career, money, success, experiences, possessions, or even doing good for others. You hope to achieve all of this because you believe it will make you feel better and happier.

The main goal in life is therefore to be HAPPY.

Can happiness be measured? Yes! You can measure happiness experienced in the brain. The stronger the activation of a particular part of the left pre-frontal cortex as opposed to the right pre-frontal cortex, the more positive the feeling, such as joy, enthusiasm, or increased energy.¹ According to scientists, Matthieu Ricard is “the happiest person in the world.” He showed a particularly high level of activation in the left-hand side of his brain. After gaining a PhD in molecular genetics, the Frenchman decided to become a Tibetan Buddhist monk in 1972. The Dalai Lama asked him to take part in scientific studies and his happiness measurements were off the scale. Matthieu Ricard defines happiness as “the deep feeling of well-being that comes from inner richness or abundance” and “a perfect state of being.”² Ricard, who says that he spends entire days in meditation, also sees himself as a very happy person – although he is ironically sometimes irritated by his nickname as “the happiest person in the world.”

“Happiness does not depend on who you are, or what you have. It depends on how you think.”

Dale Carnegie

Matthieu Ricard's definition of happiness therefore describes a state of being. Most people, however, feel and associate happiness with a short-term event. A pay rise, a new car, a holiday, etc. – all of this is associated with happy feelings. But these events do not help people to find lasting happiness.

There are three types of happiness³:

Pleasure: The adrenaline boost, the short-term happiness that is hard to maintain.

Passion: Also known as “flow”, when you become so immersed in something that you lose track of space and time.

The greater purpose: When we are part of something bigger than ourselves that we see as meaningful.

Many people spend the majority of their time chasing after pleasure, occasionally dedicating themselves to their passions, and only rarely pursuing a greater purpose. Really, it should be the other way around. The most logical path to lasting happiness is to spend the most time and energy on the greater purpose, occasionally experiencing a flow state and enjoying brief pleasures from time to time. If we know what is most important to us in life and what we value most, we also know the direction we should be moving in and where our goals and priorities should lie.

The most effective way of succeeding here is to have a goal in mind, a vision we can pursue. If we manage to overcome our inner hurdles (such as self-doubt, guilt, limiting beliefs) and learn to look to the future with confidence and optimism, then every door will be open to us in life.

Psychiatrist Regina Pally describes the process as follows:

“As has been shown in neuroscience, before anything happens, the brain creates a probability analysis of which scenario is the most likely. It then engages the perception, behavior, feelings, psychological reactions and interpersonal behaviors that best suit this scenario. To a certain extent, we learn from the past to predict the future and then live out the future that we expect.”⁴

As such, it has been scientifically proven that you can attain your own lasting happiness if you have a vision, you believe in that vision, and you align your goals and focus with it. This book is here to help you do this.

CLARITY

*“Before we know
what we are doing,
we need to know
what we think.”*

Joseph Beuys

CLARITY ABOUT YOUR LIFE

Before you start to think about where you want to go in life, it is important that you realize where you are right now. Being aware of where you are in life, what makes you strong, what makes you weak, and what your priorities are helps to increase confidence. And confidence is what helps you to achieve your dreams and goals. Numerous studies have proven how important confidence is when it comes to matters such as career excellence. Richard Boyatzis, for instance, showed that confidence is a decisive factor that separates top-level manager from the average.¹

Confidence is important not only in terms of your career but also in your own personal achievements and successes. Fulfilling your personal goals and dreams equals excellence. Being able to say no, to stand up for yourself, to find your own path in life, to follow it and accept yourself – all these things are examples of excellence that you can achieve in your life. Confidence is therefore key to succeeding in life. And to build confidence you first have to be self-aware, be AWARE OF YOURSELF.

If you understand how your strengths and weaknesses affect your behavior, you can use them better to your advantage. Self-awareness also has an impact on self-motivation. We are much more motivated if we are able to focus on what we are good at and what we find fulfilling.

*“What lies before us and what lies
behind us are small matters compared
to what lies within us. And when
we bring what is within out into
the world, miracles happen.”*

Henry David Thoreau

Many things in life are so obvious that they should be clear for all to see, yet they go unnoticed. That is why you really should think about every aspect of your life. After all, lasting happiness can only be built on a harmonious, balanced life. You don't have to aim for exceptional happiness in all areas of life at once, but many people make the mistake of only focusing on one area. That's OK for the short term, but you

could well feel the consequences in the long term, for example if you achieve great success at work but neglect your health. Or if you spend more time on a hobby but in doing so neglect your relationships.

Not only it is important to know where you are headed; it is just as important to be clear about what has prevented you from achieving your dreams and goals until now. Unconscious thought patterns and beliefs are often the reason for this. They affect your behavior which in turn, influences your experiences. You can read about how this works in the chapter entitled “Letting Go.” Many self-help books focus on setting new goals and creating action plans. Most people who want to change something tend to set goals, make lists, and just get going. In the short term that often works out beautifully, but in the long term, they often end up right back where they started. Why is that? The answer is simple, yet confusing at the same time:

“The reason is because you can’t get away from yourself!”

Meaning you always stay the same person. Your thoughts and attitudes, all of which are internalized, remain the same. High levels of motivation with regard to new goals could cover this up in the short term. New Year’s resolutions are a perfect example. But when your initial motivation starts to weaken, your original thought patterns, attitudes, and behaviors re-emerge. That’s why “you can’t get away from yourself”, even if you take new paths towards new goals. I’m sure this will sound familiar to you: If you get a new job or have a new partner, the same or similar problems often start to occur. You can change your environment, but you will always have the same experiences because your outer life is a reflection of your inner life.²

So, if you always face the same hurdles in life, are you doing something wrong? Do you have to become a new person? No, absolutely not! You are perfect just the way you are! Now, you might be asking yourself: “So, I need to change, but somehow stay the same? That’s not even possible!” Well, actually it is! The right way to phrase it is perhaps: Become the person you truly are. What you need to leave behind are things (thoughts, beliefs, behaviors) that you have adopted from other people and those that limit you, that keep you from being who you truly are. To do this, you have to become aware of what is holding you back from being your true self.

THE BIRD’S-EYE VIEW

Often, we become so blinded by routine that we can only see our life clearly by changing our perspective on things. For this reason, the toolbox begins with inspirational questions that will enable you to see your life from a different point of view. They aim to inspire you to reflect and to motivate yourself to see beyond obvious.

Often, the hectic nature of day-to-day life stops us from doing that. But the world often looks quite different when we gaze into the distance from the top of a mountain or the seashore. And that goes for your own life, too. From a bird’s-eye view, priorities often shift. Minor things become more important, while seemingly significant things suddenly lose their value.

Doing this will help you to define the vision of the life you want to lead. It is extremely empowering thing to have a clear vision of the life you want, to believe in it, and to behave as if it were already a reality. The power of thought and imagination is often completely underestimated. As Henry David Thoreau³ once wrote:

“If one advances confidently in the direction of his dreams, and endeavors to live the life which he has imagined, he will meet with a success unexpected in common hours.”

So, think about who and how you are in the life you envisage. What thoughts, attitudes, and characteristics do you want? Imagine you already have them and feel the difference right now. I want this inspiring and visionary start to the exercises to motivate you to think big when it comes to your goals and to believe in yourself. Find out more about visualization in the chapter entitled “Focus.”

*“I prefer
to remember
the future.”
Salvador Dali*

YOUR LIFE AREAS

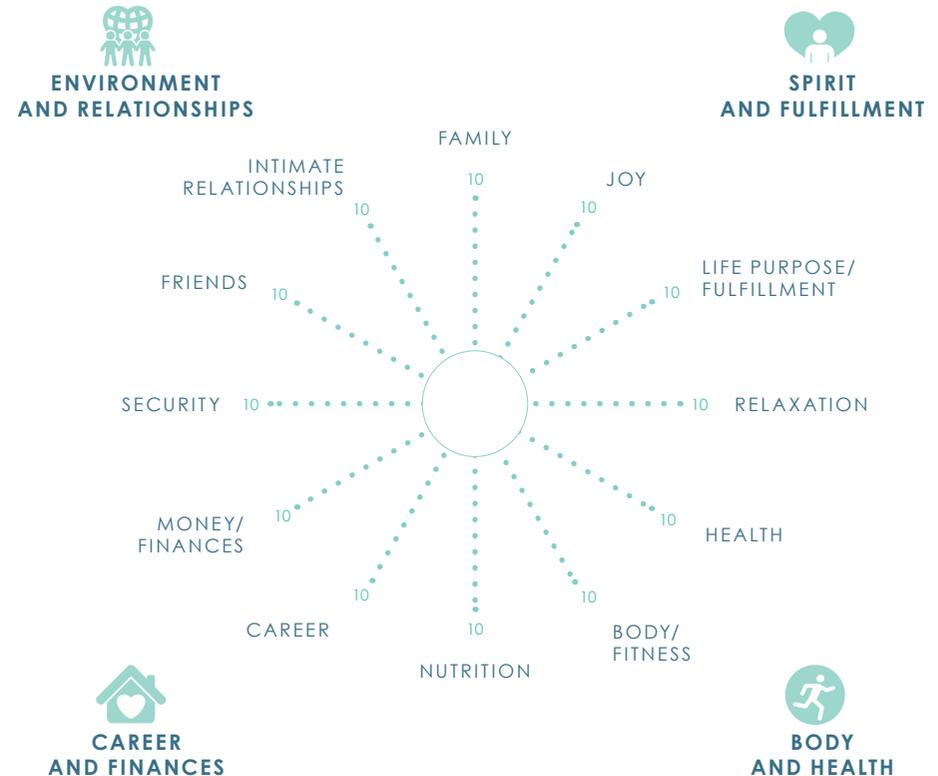
Take a look at the twelve life areas, grouped into four categories, to achieve clarity about yourself and your life. This is just a rough categorization. Life is, of course, much more complicated than this. Topics are often interrelated and can become mixed up. But there are also common threads, such as self-esteem, perfectionism, or the need for harmony, that can affect a variety of areas. For example, do you sometimes think you are not good enough? Or that you are not worthy or lovable? If so, you will probably feel the effects of this across several areas of your life. If you recognize a pattern that affects various areas, the causes may become clearer, allowing you to tackle the pattern more easily. The aspects you identify are precisely the ones you should focus on. After all, once you have resolved the cause, problems in many individual areas can disappear much more easily on their own.

*“It’s time to start something new
and trust the magic of beginnings.”*

Meister Eckhart

The life-area categories are designed to help you achieve clarity about your life, to organize your personal issues, and to offer a structure for addressing them. In each of the life areas, you will not only find the topics you want to improve on but also your own personal sources of strength and energy. These are the happy moments in life, i.e. the things that give you energy. Why do you get up in the morning, what do you enjoy? Does the relationship with your partner help you to cope with stress at work? Are sports the passion that enables you to reach your full potential? No matter what they might be, gain clarity about your sources of strength, your happy moments.

If you look closely, you will find something to motivate you in every area. Changing your life requires energy. If the path toward change uses more energy than it gives you, you will lose motivation over the long term. So, don’t just look at the life areas you want to change, but also those that give you strength and enable you to make those changes. Find out more about why sources of strength are so important in the chapter entitled “Motivation.”



The toolbox allows you to reflect on these life areas at present [p. 52] and evaluate them on a scale of 1 (dissatisfied) to 10 (happy). In addition to these life areas, there are various overarching topics, such as self-esteem, self-confidence, stress/ease, need for harmony, and perfectionism. These are repeated in various areas and are often the biggest hurdles we have to overcome in life. If you want to address an overarching topic, analyze your current situation with regard to that topic. Ask yourself, for example: “How confident do I feel at work, with my body, or in my relationship?” Listing your limiting beliefs can be useful when addressing an overarching topic [see the chapter entitled “Letting Go”].

LETTING GO

“Insanity is doing the same thing over and over again and expecting different results.”

Albert Einstein

FROM THINKING TO DOING TO BEING

Your thoughts influence your actions. And your actions influence your experiences. Consequently, you need to change your behavior to change your experiences. This starts with changing the way you think. Change therefore begins in the mind. It’s just like driving a car: Once you’ve learned how everything works (using the brakes, clutch, gears), it all starts to feel natural. Your subconscious has taken the wheel and driving becomes second nature to you. Learning, just like all types of behavior, follows the same sequence: From thinking to doing to being.



The human brain processes millions of items of data every single second. It analyzes, investigates, identifies and classifies information, and stores it away. The information we store can then be accessed whenever we need it. The human brain is truly the best supercomputer on Earth. Connecting millions of nerve cells, nerve fibers criss-cross the brain like a network of highways. When certain neural pathways are used more frequently than others, they form neural networks, resulting in specific patterns of thought, action, and reaction.¹

*“What we think,
we become.”*

Buddha

In specific situations, the brain immediately accesses old data to see if a habitual connection has already been formed. If so, it uses this well-traveled path. This explains why, when we are driving down familiar routes, we often cannot remember the entire drive. For example, when traveling home from work. The subconscious knows exactly where we need to go and sends a signal for us to turn right

or left when we reach a (familiar) junction. This enables us to always arrive at our usual destination with ease, without having to make any conscious decisions.

This situation probably also sounds familiar: Instead of driving home after work you're going to see a friend. While driving, you become lost in thought, distracted by other topics. Suddenly, you realize that you are driving home and not to your friend's house. This is exactly how we behave in all familiar situations that have already been linked with a reaction. In some cases, this can have a very positive effect.

However, problems often occur when we allow our feelings (habits) to direct us toward a type of behavior that we don't actually want. For example, if you ask someone for help but they have no time to spare, they might simply say: "Sorry, maybe another time." On the other end, people who crave harmony, may well say "Yes" to avoid discord, despite this making them feel bad, stressed, and finally exhausted. A similar pattern occurs if someone touches on one of our sore spots.

*"Letting go is the key
to happiness."*

Buddha

If someone touches on something that is a sore point for us, we often overreact. It only takes a few seconds for us to become very agitated or feel deeply hurt. Afterwards, it usually becomes clear that this reaction changes nothing about the situation and that we would actually much prefer to stay happy and relaxed. When we are in the middle of the situation, however, it isn't that easy to recognize and control our reaction due to our old (familiar) pattern.

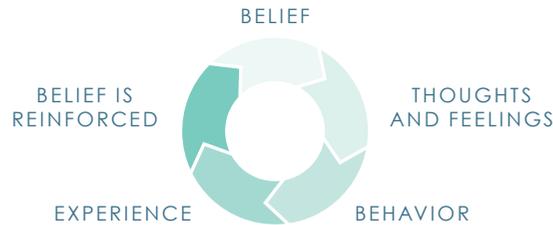
The brain always takes the simplest, and therefore the most familiar, path. Yet, should we manage to direct our thoughts and emotions, we can react in the way that is best for us (and for everyone involved). The latest findings in neuroscience have shown that this is something we can learn to do. One important thing to note is that certain exercises can help us to consciously change our brain. That doesn't just go for certain situations but also for specific beliefs we have about our lives.

CHANGING HABITS

We strengthen our neural networks with all of our emotions and thoughts, both good and bad. Everything that we think, do, and turn our attention to changes our brain.² Negative thoughts (the world is a bad place) and positive thoughts (I can do this) strengthen the connections. These connections in turn unconsciously form our beliefs about life. And our beliefs influence our actions and reactions in everything we do. We can use this specific mechanism to our benefit! If you want to change your behavior, you first need to actively block your familiar pathways (the existing, frequently used neural pathways) and consciously choose new ones. After all, if your thoughts and emotions simply repeat themselves from yesterday and the day before, you will end up creating the same situations that result in the same emotions and, finally, the same thoughts.



The capacity for self-reflection enables us to scrutinize ourselves. It lets us plan how we can consciously change our behavior so that we are able to achieve desirable goals.³ Your familiar you is the strongest habit you can give up. So many thoughts are anchored so deeply within us that we don't even notice how much of a driving force they are in our lives. Everyone is born with endless potential. That's the real you. Over time the thoughts and beliefs that limit our potential take root in our minds. They often originate in our environment (parents, friends, school, work, etc.) and take hold if we hear them often enough. That is why we struggle to identify mental blocks and habits – we are not even aware of them.



We know what isn't working and what we wish would work. But we often don't know what is stopping us from fulfilling our wishes. Everything in our lives is a reflection of our inner beliefs.⁴ Every thought we think, every word we speak is an affirmation. Self-talk takes the form of affirmations that create and reinforce experiences in our lives. Simply look at your experiences to see what you believe in.

In the same vein, the people around you are a reflection of what you believe about yourself. If your suggestions are often overruled or you prefer to go along with what others want to do, that is probably because you do not value your own opinion and are too timid to stand up for yourself. Have you ever started a relationship that quickly fell apart when you realized that the other person was not who you thought they were? If so, this could be caused by the unconscious belief that you will never have a stable romantic relationship. Similarly, you can destroy career opportunities if you harbor the unconscious belief that you do not deserve them.

What we want can differ widely from what we (unconsciously) believe. Unconscious general beliefs could include “Men are bad,” “Women are weak,” or “Life's not fair.” Beliefs that are based on low self-esteem, for example, can be reflected both in your working life and your private life (in relationships). Their possible effects on behavior and experiences are listed here as an example.

BELIEFS	BEHAVIOR	EXPERIENCE
<i>I'm not enough.</i> <i>I'm not important.</i> <i>I'm not worthy of love.</i> <i>Women are weaker than men.</i> <i>Conflict leads to break-ups.</i>	<i>I have to prove myself.</i> <i>I don't ask for help.</i> <i>I'm insecure.</i> <i>I'm inferior.</i> <i>I give in and follow the crowd.</i>	<i>You end up having to do all the work.</i> <i>You are not valued/ appreciated.</i> <i>You can't find the right partner.</i> <i>You live life as others wish.</i>

“It is what a man thinks of himself that really determines his fate.”

Mark Twain

Keep this cycle in mind and it will help you consciously choose new paths (thoughts, behaviors). Select a specific topic that you want to address. That's your focus topic [p. 60]. Describe a situation relating to that topic and how you experienced it. Now, rewrite the experience, describing it as you would have wanted it to be. How would you have liked your thoughts and behavior to be? If you internalize new habits, you can draw on them whenever you are faced with a similar situation. Of course, it might not happen right away. But you can repeat this exercise as many times as you like until it becomes a new habit. This can open up new opportunities to you in many areas. You will start to see people and situations from a new perspective and discover opportunities where previously you only saw problems.

THE POWER OF THOUGHT

To break free of limiting thoughts, we need to expand our consciousness. By recognizing and being conscious of the fact that beliefs are self-imposed and correspond to our perceptions, we can actually change them. This frees us up for more opportunities on a bigger scale.⁵ In the toolbox [p. 54], write down which beliefs and thought patterns you have unconsciously adopted about yourself and your life. Then think about how you actually want to be and write down your new, chosen affirmations and beliefs. Think about which thoughts, attitudes, and characteristics you want to have that are in harmony with the goal that you want to achieve.

This statement is very powerful for transforming thought patterns from limiting beliefs to affirmations: “I am/have...”⁶

“I am confident.”

“I am worthy.”

“I am fine just as I am.”

“I have a harmonious family life.”

“I am successful.”

“I have time for myself.”

If you regularly repeat these “I” statements, they will become anchored in your subconscious and gradually replace the “I’m not” or “I don’t” statements. Little by little, you will create new neural pathways. With mental practice (repeatedly visualizing yourself doing something specific), you will be able to reorganize the circuitry in your brain so that it reflects what you want (for example: “I am confident,” “I can say no.”) We can actually change our thoughts so effectively that they can trigger a change in the brain, making it look as though the event has in fact happened.⁷ Known as a mental “trial run,” this is a useful tool in giving up our familiar old self and creating a new self.

Positive thinking alone, however, cannot overcome subconscious negative feelings. I’m sure that all of us have at some time expressly said “I want to be happy.” But as long as the body does not receive any orders to the contrary, it will continue to fall back on old feelings of guilt, sadness, etc. We only feel what we think and then think how we

feel. This results in our state of being. To achieve a new state of being, we therefore not only have to adjust the way we think but also the way we feel.



FEELINGS + THOUGHTS = STATE OF BEING

That is why when it comes to your focus topic, you also need to describe your feelings [p. 60]. When new feelings and thoughts are aligned, you have achieved your desired state of being. Rewording your old thought patterns as new affirmations can help achieve this.

STOPPING NEGATIVE THOUGHT CYCLES

This exercise is very helpful in everyday life when your mind is trying to take you back down well-trodden tracks:



As soon as you catch an unwanted thought, visualize a big stop sign. Stop your thought in its tracks with the stop sign and prevent the negative thought cycle from picking up speed. Pause for a moment and consciously select your new, positive thought.

A good idea is reminding yourself over and over again that thoughts are beliefs. They are created by us, which means that we can also change them. Pay attention to your thoughts and beliefs to become aware of your limiting beliefs. Mindfulness is very helpful in becoming aware of your unconscious thoughts. By being mindful of your usual, no-longer wanted thought patterns and by keeping an active focus on new thoughts and your new goal, you will be able to step away from your old habits and create new ones.

MINDFULNESS

According to Jon Kabat-Zinn, mindfulness is “paying attention in a particular way: on purpose, in the present moment, and non-judgmentally.”⁸ This means first being aware (noticing something) and then accepting it openly and without judgment. You have the opportunity to view the situation from a neutral perspective and to make a conscious decision afterwards. We generally react immediately to a stimulus or event. Mindfulness acts as a kind of buffer between the event and the reaction. This gap can help to break up ingrained reactions and then change them.



For example, you might find yourself in a situation that provokes strong emotions. If someone accuses you of something, treats you unfairly, or puts you in a stressful situation, your immediate reaction would usually leave you feeling angry, disappointed, insecure, or stressed. If we evaluate a situation, we are unable to see the facts, but rather what we fear or desire. This colors and distorts the actual situation.

However, if we view the situation with mindfulness, we can see things as they truly are, and all the illusions drop away. You now have the ability to observe your thoughts and emotions. And when you carefully sift through your thoughts, you can become conscious of unconscious thought patterns. For example, you will feel the annoyance rising (insecurity, stress), but you won't actually become annoyed, insecure or stressed. And that is the crucial difference: being able to perceive your emotions and thoughts, to observe them, but not absorb them.

Your mind remains calm and clear and you are not governed by the situation. The situation therefore doesn't control you – instead, you decide how you want to deal with it. Infinite freedom is yours because you can reach a conscious decision with a clear, calm mind. There are

people, for example, who feel scared in new or certain situations, yet they still take risks. Fear is simply a feeling and not the problem itself, rather the way we handle it.⁹

Another great side effect is happiness. When your mind is calm and clear, it returns to its original state.¹⁰ And the mind's most basic state is one of happiness. It is, as Matthieu Ricard said, a state of being. According to this concept, mindfulness allows you to be happy in any situation if you are able to truly perceive the moment in time and not judge it.

This might sound easy, but it is often very difficult in our hectic, everyday lives. We often forget to live in the here and now and think more about the future or lose ourselves in regrets about the past. But it is possible to practice mindfulness. The human brain is an organ that can be trained, in the same way that you might train muscle. Just like we strength-train our muscles, we exercise our brain's power of attention. In mindfulness training, our focus will always wander at first and we will find ourselves lost among swirling thoughts. But with a little practice, we can become more aware of our bodies and more able to control our emotions. Mindfulness exercises have been proven to boost mental health. Sara Lazar, a US researcher, discovered that regular practice changes the architecture of our brains.¹¹

*Life is 10%
what happens to you,
and 90% how you
react to it.*

According to studies, this not only boosts our ability to concentrate and strengthens our immune system – it can also help in treating anxiety and chronic stress.¹² Stress levels are lowered, allowing more space for happiness and life purposes. The mindfulness meditation exercises on the next page will help you not only to increase your concentration, they will also bring calm and clarity to your life and your unconscious mind. If you practice mindfulness, your attention will also be unconsciously drawn by things that you either find very pleasant or very unpleasant.¹³ Paying attention to the things that aren't so nice lets you

stop yourself from automatically falling back into old thought patterns and behaviors. Instead, your mindful approach will enable you to reflect and make decisions more consciously.

What's more, your increased focus on the nicer things in life means that happy moments will not simply slip by unseen. You will notice them more acutely, or start noticing them, which will give you the opportunity to enjoy them and be grateful [see gratitude in the chapter entitled "Motivation"].

These exercises will show you how to easily integrate mindfulness into your day. You can be mindful and meditate anywhere you go and at any time – as long as you can remain both relaxed and attentive at the same time.

MINDFULNESS EXERCISES

- **WHEN EATING:** Be completely mindful of what you are eating or drinking. Put your phone away and really take note of every bite. Try to mindfully eat something like an apple.
- **WHEN WAKING UP:** Lie there for a few minutes with eyes open after you wake up. Feel yourself breathing, listen to your body and commit to meeting the day's experiences (or a particular situation) with mindfulness.
- **WHEN WAITING:** Focused breathing is great when you are waiting at a stop light, at the cash desk in the supermarket, at the doctor's office, or for your food at a restaurant. Simply pause now and then throughout the day and consciously perceive that current moment in time.
- **WHEREVER YOU ARE:** Perform your everyday duties with mindfulness and enjoy them. Do this in the shower, while brushing your teeth, washing your hair, driving, walking, tidying up, working in the garden, etc.
- **WHEN GOING TO SLEEP:** Before going to sleep, reflect on the moments during the day in which you were mindful. When did it go well and what could you do better next time?

MEDITATION

Go somewhere you will be undisturbed for a few minutes and find a comfortable position. You can sit, lie down, or do whatever is comfortable and relaxing for you.

Take three deep breaths to relax and collect your thoughts.

Then start to breathe completely normally and calmly. Breathe in and out, in and out.

Focus only on your breathing.

Imagine how the air is flowing into your nose and through your whole body. It flows through your throat into your abdomen and through your arms and legs. Imagine that you are breathing in pure, clean air and energy. Feel how it spreads throughout your body.

Then imagine it flowing out of you. Everything you want to let go of dissolves and leaves your body when you breathe out. The negative energy in your body flows out and is replaced with new, fresh energy the next time you inhale.

If you catch your thoughts wandering, don't get frustrated. Simply notice it, without judging, and bring your attention back to your breathing.

With each breath, you will feel freer and calmer. It is important that you stay focused and concentrate only on your breathing.

Breathe in and out, in and out.

Repeat this meditation for 15 to 20 minutes. You can, of course, start with five minutes and build up the time with each exercise. Don't get frustrated if your thoughts go astray – it's completely normal at the beginning. There are variations on this type of meditation: You could imagine how you are breathing in ease, self-awareness, or calm, and how this feeling spreads through your body. When you breathe out, your worries, doubts, and restlessness begin to release. You can also use the meditation for your affirmations and "I am" statements, absorbing them into your body and anchoring them there.

MOTIVATION

*“Happiness is already here.
It is within us. We have
simply forgotten and need
to remember it
from time to time.”*

Socrates

MAINTAINING MOTIVATION

We tend to be highly motivated when pursuing new goals. Over time, however, our motivation weakens. To create lasting change in your life, it is important to stay motivated and to pursue your goals and vision in the long term. Motivation is influenced by the amount of energy you have and the successes you have experienced. You can gain energy through moments of happiness, for example. If something does you good and you look forward to it, this releases endorphins in your body. They help to increase your energy level.

Happy moments are not necessarily associated with major events. You experience them during everyday occurrences, yet they still have a major impact on your energy level. A massage in the evening? Going to the movies with friends? Reading your children a bedtime story? The effects of positive moments in our life are reinforced if we are consciously aware of them and direct our thoughts toward them.

*“What a wonderful life I’ve had!
I only wish I’d realized it sooner.”*

Colette

Numerous studies show that taking the time every day to journal positive events, thoughts, and emotions boosts your mood and leads to results in tests. Just four minutes a day can already make a significant difference.¹ This helps you to stay motivated, providing energy that strengthens you and frees your mind to pursue your goals and work toward the vision of the life you want. Every day should be dedicated to doing something that you enjoy and that makes you happy. Hence a section of the toolbox being dedicated to developing your personal list of happy moments [pp.56/57] for all areas of your life. Use it every day when writing in your planner. You can also look back at the list if things aren’t going so well and you feel like you need a boost.

It’s best to plan these happy moments before you get up in the morning so that you can start the day feeling motivated and full of happy anticipation. You will see just how many happy moments you have in your life. Happiness gives you energy and lets you pursue your goals, also in the long run.

MAKING SUCCESS VISIBLE

Many people are high-achievers yet are still dissatisfied because they are not aware of their successes. It is important that you make your success visible and accept that failures are an inevitable part of success.

“I’ve missed more than 9,000 shots in my career. I’ve lost almost 300 games. 26 times, I’ve been trusted to take the game winning shot and missed. I’ve failed over and over and over again in my life. And that is why I succeed.”²

This quote comes from Michael Jordan, who was named the best basketball player of all time by the NBA. There is no shame in failure. Even the greatest and most successful of us, like Michael Jordan, have experienced failure many times. The same goes for Thomas Watson, who was CEO of IBM for many years. He once said:

“If you want to increase your success rate, double your failure rate.”

Successful people differ from unsuccessful people in terms of their attitude and how they deal with setbacks. The most successful people are optimists; they see failure as an experience and a chance to learn what they could do better next time. And, perhaps most importantly: They keep going!

Unsuccessful people don’t see setbacks as failures but rather see themselves as failures and give up. They don’t understand that a failure is simply a stepping stone on the path toward success. Your fate and future are not defined by individual successes or failures but by the significance that you give to these events.

So, if you experience failure, remember this:

1. Don’t blame yourself – it’s normal.
2. You are not a failure; this is just a moment in time tied to a specific situation.
3. Learn from the experience and do it better next time.
4. Look ahead and pursue your vision.

OPTIMISM CAN BE LEARNED

We can experience many more positive events in life than negative ones and yet still suffer from the impression that things are the other way around. “Everything always goes wrong for me” is not only a limiting belief that many people fall back on as a habit [see chapter entitled “Letting Go”], but it often does not even reflect the objective truth.

Barbara Fredrickson, a well-known psychologist in the field of positive psychology, discovered that there is a ratio of 3:1 for negative to positive feelings. According to this ratio, you need three times as many positive experiences to balance out one negative one. This means that you have very likely had many more positive experiences in your life than you think. To become more positive and optimistic, it is essential that you acknowledge the positive experiences and pay less attention to the more negative events.³

*“The greatest glory
in living lies not in never falling,
but in rising every time we fall.”*

Nelson Mandela

Mindfulness is very helpful here. Direct your attention to your successes and the positive experiences of the day. Be proud of the little things you do well; no one is expecting you to save the whole world. Write down your successes and experiences and make them visible so you can see events objectively. Should you suffer a failure, think of your successes so far. You will achieve a new, more balanced view of your successes and failures and become automatically more optimistic with time. And, as you already know, being yourself is your biggest success. If you are at peace with yourself, there’s not much in life that can put you off your stride.

Strive to be a better version of yourself every day and be proud of your progress. Your optimism will not only affect what you expect from life, but also what you dare to attempt. After a while, you will be amazed at how your view on things in your life will change.

FROM NEGATIVE TO POSITIVE

It can be hard to create and really believe in a positive sentence such as “I am successful”. Particularly if you are feeling like a complete failure. Saying “I am positive” is just as difficult if all you feel is rage at the world or wish the ground would swallow you up. Most people are familiar with moments like this and there is a clever trick to handling this problem: Start neutral!

Flipping the switch from unsuccessful to successful is like having a train barreling along in one direction at 100 mph and then suddenly wanting to whip around and go 100 mph in the other direction. It’s just not possible. If you want to arrive at 100% positive starting at 100% negative, it is easier to go from negative to neutral first. And if neutral feels good (is believable for you), then you are ready to move to the positive. Anything else would be like laughing on the outside while crying on the inside. It may look good at first but it won’t work in the long run because the muscles in your face will start to stiffen up at some point. It is just not natural and doesn’t feel right.

*“Whether you think you can,
or you think you can’t:
You’re right.”*

Henry Ford

Use the focus-wheel exercise to move your focus from negative to positive. This exercise can be applied to all areas of your life. “Successful” in the example shown here could also be “self-aware” or “successful in the pursuit of your own path in life.” You are always successful when you achieve the goal you have set for yourself. Your biggest success is being who you really are. You are successful when you are YOU, when you can look in the mirror and say to yourself:

*“This is who I am. I like myself just as I am.
I want to become a better version of myself, every day.
And that’s why I’m proud of myself.”*

Believe in yourself and have faith in yourself and your abilities.

This exercise will help you let go of a limiting belief and replace it with new thoughts and beliefs. The aim here is to convince yourself of the truth in the statement and to internalize a positive attitude and expectations.

THE FOCUS WHEEL

Write down the goal you want to achieve in the middle and add your thoughts about it around the outside. Start at the top and work clockwise, going from statement to statement and becoming more positive as you go, until you have reached your desired goal at the end. Each individual step (from neutral to positive) must feel good and be something you can say YES to. Then you can move on. Until you can ultimately get yourself to say YES to “I am successful.”



Be patient with yourself if you need to repeat this exercise several times. In the past, your neural pathways probably took the same route very often and need to change their approach.

TRUSTING IN LIFE WITH GRATITUDE

When was the last time you were grateful? Louise Hay felt gratitude every morning and said thank you for the good night. Louise Hay († 2017, aged 90) was the grande dame of authors in the world of self-help literature. Gratitude opened her eyes to a whole new take on life.⁴ She practiced it with great mindfulness and attention and thanked everyone and everything. For a good night, for the fact that the car worked properly, or that the computer made it easier to keep in touch with friends. There was a sign under her mirror in the kitchen. It said: “What are you grateful for today?” Once she had made gratitude part of her daily routine, she regained her trust in her life. She felt worthy of love again and realized that life really loved her.

Fundamental trust gives us certainty that life generally means us well. When we win back this basic trust, we gain a renewed connection to our true selves. We need a relaxed feeling of trust and an appreciation of life. Without joy and gratitude for the things life gives us, we live in a state of constant defensiveness, in conflict with others and ourselves.⁵ However, if we are filled with love, appreciation, and gratitude, life feels easier. Many other things will then also emerge that we can be grateful for.⁶ With trust, all things are possible. And trust unlocks the limitless potential of our unconditioned selves, our true selves.⁷ All this can be yours if you are able let go of all your restrictive and assumed thought patterns. Spiritual teacher Ram Dass⁸ says:

*“Trust is knowing that you will not master life
with what you think you are,
but that you will with what you really are.”*

So if you trust in yourself and your life, you will be one step closer to your true self. Start with gratitude, like Louise Hay, and pay more attention to the good things in your life. Be grateful for what you have today. At some point, this will feel really easy and natural for you. Gratitude can be inspiring and truly change your life and the world. Start and end each day with mindfulness and gratitude because appreciation, happiness, and acknowledgment have a strengthening effect. This gives you the energy you need to see your change through and to acknowledge the successes you have had so far.

DAY-TO-DAY HAPPINESS AND MOTIVATION

Make gratitude part of your daily routine and at the same time create little moments of happiness in your life.

- Write Statements on Post-It notes and stick them on your mirror. “I’m grateful for...!” “Life loves me!” “I trust myself and my life!”
- Look forward to the day ahead and say “Thank you” for each of your first three steps after getting out of bed.
- End each day with gratitude. If you fall asleep feeling grateful, you will wake up feeling good.
- Are you worried that something won’t work? Think about how the expectation of a positive event increases the likelihood of it occurring.
- Enjoy the little things in life again. The sun’s shining in your face? What a beautiful day! Your beloved is smiling at you? What a blessing it is to have them in your life. Have you done something you planned on doing? Be proud of yourself and grateful for your success.
- Every evening, take two minutes and enter the nice things you experienced in your weekly planner, what you enjoyed and what you are grateful for. No matter what situation or company you are in, try to find something for which you are grateful.
- Be proud of yourself. You are special and you’re taking control of your life. You deserve to be happy. Think about your vision of the life you want and be happy about the goals you have already achieved and those that still await, each of which will bring you a step closer to the life you really want to lead.

You can find the success barometer in the weekly planner. On a scale of 1 to 5, mark down how happy or successful you have been in that area.

-  □□□□ ENVIRONMENT AND RELATIONSHIPS
-  □□□□ SPIRIT AND FULFILLMENT
-  □□□□ BODY AND HEALTH
-  □□□□ CAREER AND FINANCES
-  □□□□ OVERALL

This will make your successes visible and you can be sure to have reflected upon every area of your life.

FOCUS

*“Only he who knows
his destination will
find his way.”*

Lao-Tse

DEFINING GOALS THE RIGHT WAY

If you don't know where you want to go, you will never get there. It's just like using a sat-nav. If you don't key in a destination, someone else will – and you will find yourself headed toward where they want to go instead. So, think about where you want to go and be as specific as possible. Focus on what you want and not on what you don't want. Ask yourself what you can do in each life area to put you on track to achieving your vision. Set SMART goals.

SMART

S pecific
M easurable
A ttractive
R ealistic
T ime-related

“I want to have more time for myself” or “I want to lose weight” are aspirational aims but they do not work as concrete goals. In terms of SMART goals, they might sound like this: “I want to lose five pounds in the next four weeks so that I can fit into my dress/suit again.” This goal is specific (lose weight), measurable (five pounds), attractive (to fit into the dress/suit again), realistic (five pounds in four weeks) and time-related (four weeks).

The important thing here is: You know exactly what you want and have it clearly in mind. This is why, you should set yourself positive goals. When it comes to desires and goals, it's like the pink elephant experiment: Try NOT to think of a pink elephant. So, what are you thinking of? Exactly! Your subconscious doesn't understand DON'T. If you try to actively NOT do something, then it's as if you actually want to do it.

*“Focus on what you want to achieve,
and not on what
you want to avoid.”*

Zamora

Thoughts such as “I want to be less stressed,” “I want to eat less,” “I will no longer be taken advantage of,” “I don't want to be alone anymore,” or “I don't want to worry about money any more” direct your focus to a deficiency, i.e. to something you don't want any more. Instead, you should focus on what you want to achieve. If you focus on time, weight loss, a feeling of ease, prosperity, or love, the focus will be redi-

rected from the deficiency to a new goal. After all, everything we turn our attention to is magnified in life – the negative and the positive. Similarly, “I” statements are positive affirmations that gradually become anchored in your subconscious the more you repeat them. Say, for example: “I am committed to myself and will say NO if I don’t have time.” The word “no” will become anchored in your thoughts and thus in your vocabulary. If you think of the word “no” more often and thus form a new habit, it will be easier for the word to cross your lips. You are striving to create clarity in your goals and the desired result, and thus to bring clarity to you. The more you think about what you want and not about what you don’t want, the more it will feel real to you and gradually become evident in your life.

VISUALIZATION

Visualization is a technique where you envisage a desired state as if it were already reality. You can work toward manifesting the desired state in your life by visualizing it. In the chapter “Letting Go,” you learned that neuroscience has proven that we are actually able to change our brain and thus our behavior simply by thinking in a different way.¹

As postulated by the observer effect in quantum physics, we direct our energy to exactly the place our attention is currently focused on. As a result, we can influence the world of material things (consisting mainly of energy, by the way). “Change your viewpoint and you can change reality” – this would be one potential way of understanding the observer effect. In other words: We get back what we emanate. If we want ease, self-confidence, and love to manifest in our lives, we already need to feel at ease, confident, and loved. Imagine you are living the life you want to lead. Think, feel, and act as if it were already the case.

Many well-known people have done exactly that – for example, Martin Luther King, Mahatma Gandhi and Nelson Mandela. They all imagined a future reality and it was completely clear to them what they wanted. They believed in a pre-determined future that was so real in their minds that they lived as if they had already fulfilled their dreams, even if the change was still a long time coming in the outside world. In the end, reality caught up with their vision.

Albert Einstein once said:

*“Everything is energy and that’s all there is to it.
Match the frequency of the reality
you want and you cannot help but get that reality.
It can be no other way. This is not philosophy. This is physics.”*

Buddha said:

*“All that we are is the result
of what we have thought.”*

These quotes show that you create your own reality. Feel, do, and be today what you want to be (or have) tomorrow and the reality will come. Make sure that what you desire comes from the heart during visualization. It should be in harmony with your innermost feelings. Believing, feeling, being, and trusting that it will be so – this is the formula for visualizing your future. If you simply envisage your future without feeling that your desire has already been fulfilled, then it’s nothing but futile daydreaming. Being grateful for having fulfilled your desire is another way of strengthening the visualization. There are various visualization methods, a few of which are listed here. Select the one that appeals to you most and spend a few minutes in your new reality every day. Connect to your desired goal and act as if it were already reality.

VISUALIZATION METHODS

- **VISION BOARD/PHOTO ALBUM:** Select images (photos, newspaper clippings, etc.) that relate to your desired goal. See this as a way of looking back at the past. While you’re looking at the images, revel in the complete gratitude you feel while imagining that this is what you have already achieved.
- **MENTAL:** Imagine your new reality using both your thoughts and feelings. This is powerful in combination with meditation or a breathing technique.
- **MUSIC:** Use a specific song that makes you feel positive. You can also combine this with the vision board or the mental visualization methods.

5 GOLDEN RULES

#1 WHAT, NOT HOW

Zoom in on the final goal and fill it in with thousands of details: your partner, the car, etc., or imagine that you are having a party to celebrate having achieved your goal. Don't think about HOW you can make it happen. Thinking about all the coincidences that might occur to make this happen goes beyond the realm of imagination.

#2 FEEL

How do you feel once you have fulfilled your wish? Are you care-free, confident, successful, elated, or filled with adrenaline? Tap into your emotional state when your wish has come true. Allow yourself to feel those emotions right now. Imagine the situations that could occur in your life as a result. Allow yourself to experience them. The more realistic it feels to you, the more likely it is that your wish will become reality.

#3 TRUST

Have faith in the fact that it will work. Do not doubt whether you are on the right path. It's like planting a seed. You plant the seed, water it regularly, and trust that a seedling will soon become visible. You don't dig up the seed and check whether it's germinated yet. Trust that the seed is germinating, growing, and a plant will soon peek out from under the soil.

#4 BE POSITIVE

Only visualize what you want, not what you don't want. Statements such as "No more stress or anxiety" and "No longer wanting to be alone" put the focus on stress, anxiety, and being alone. Instead, you could focus on time, a feeling of ease, prosperity, or love. Everything we turn our attention to is magnified in life – the negative and the positive.

#5 IGNORE THE CURRENT SITUATION

Don't feel restricted by your current situation and don't limit your power of imagination. Your thoughts from the past are what created your present. Thinking something like "This is simply what reality is" will only take you to where you are at the moment, and that is not where (or what) you want to be (or what you want to have).

PUTTING GOALS INTO PRACTICE

30 MINS EVERY MONTH

Choose three goals every month that you want to focus on. Decide what you want to achieve and what you will do about it each month. They should be goals that bring you closer to your version of your ideal life. Break down the monthly goals into weekly goals. This ensures that your goals don't get lost in day-to-day life. To support this, choose your new "I am" statements so that you can start the month with the right inner beliefs.

At the end of the month, reflect on how you have gotten closer to your goals and the experiences you garnered. This means thinking about what didn't work so well and what you want to let go of, as well as what worked well and what you would like to focus on even more. You should then adapt this for the following month, getting closer step-by-step to the life that you really want as you gather more experiences.

20 MINS EVERY WEEK

Your weekly goals don't just include your focus goals – they consider all areas of your life equally. They ensure balance and harmony in your life, which are essential to lasting happiness. Set a weekly goal and plan various measures to help achieve it throughout the week. Setting aside a little time just once a week is enough to plan your goals for the following week.

4 MINS EVERY DAY

Creating a daily routine is important in order to turn something new into a habit. Read your daily goal every morning and spend some time in the evening reflecting upon how successful you have been. The success barometer can help you to take all aspects of your life into account. Your successes will be made visible and you will

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 CAREER AND FINANCES
 OVERALL

be able to recognize stress patterns that you can then address in a targeted way.

On pages 66 to 69, you will find an overview of how to best use the entire weekly planner.

2

TOOLBOX

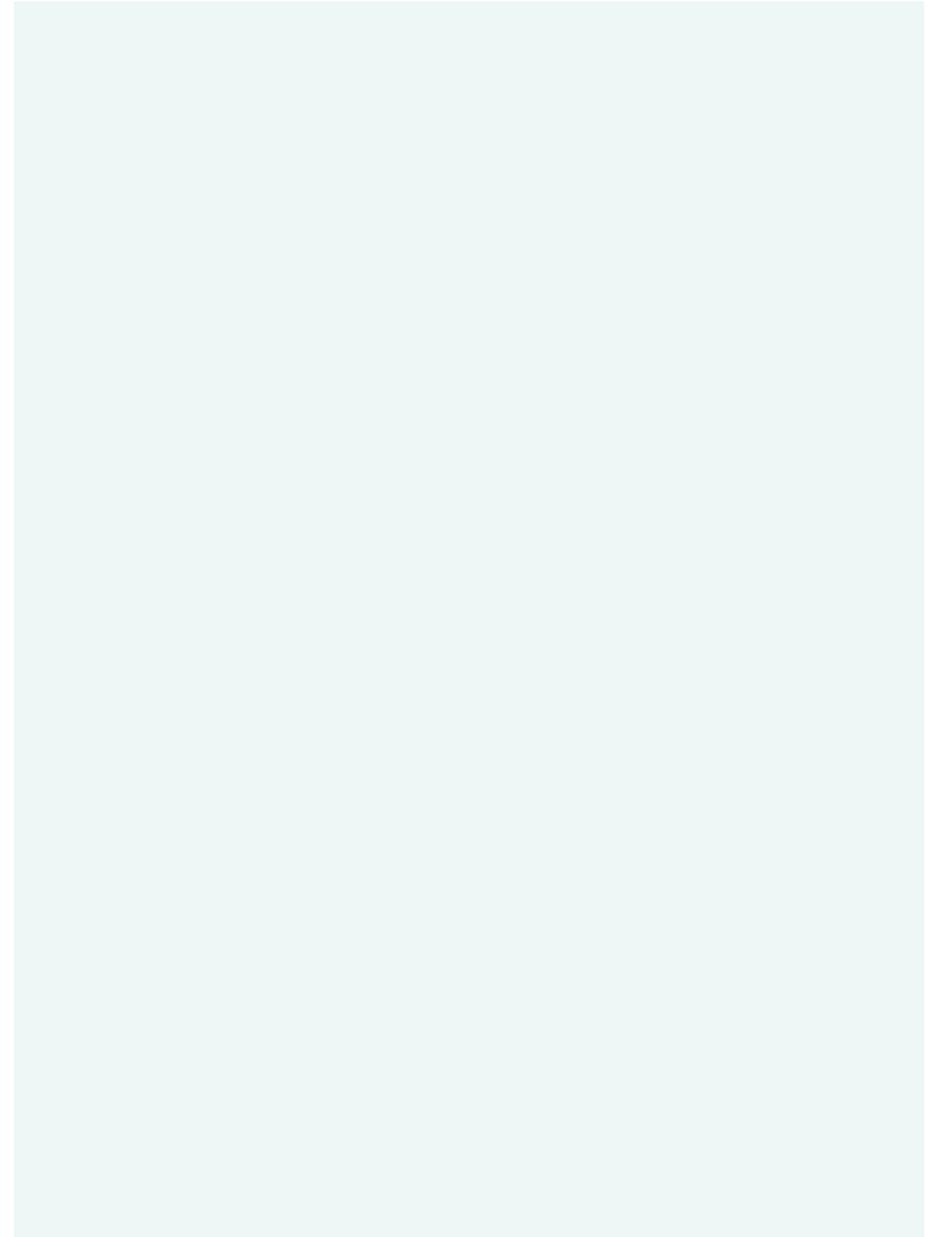
INSPIRATIONAL QUESTIONS

These questions will help you to see your life from another perspective. They are designed to inspire you to reflect and to motivate you to see beyond what is immediately obvious. All you have to do is take the time to think about them and become inspired.

- Replace the terms “work” and “leisure” with “life”, and ask yourself: “Is what I am doing meaningful?”
- What would you do if you knew you couldn’t lose?
- What are you most proud of in your life?
- When do you find yourself in the flow? When do you lose all sense of time and space?
- Do you focus on what you love and enjoy, or on what you think you should do?
- What prevents you from following your heart?
- Who are the five most important people in your life? Do they know? Really?
- Whom do you admire? And why?
- Are you the person you want to spend the rest of your life with?
- Are you afraid of something that you want? Why?
- Do you love yourself? If you don’t love yourself, who should?
- When was the last time you did something for the first time?
- When was the last time you did something that no one (including yourself) expected of you?
- What do you do differently from many other people?
- What is your unfulfilled passion?
- What goals do you pursue with passion? Which have you already achieved?
- Do you allow yourself to be guided by what you believe others think of you?
- When do you stop being true to yourself to accommodate other people?
- What do you still want to learn in your life?
- How often do you listen to your intuition/gut?
- Who are you when you are by yourself? Do other people know that? Why not?
- What have been the three best moments in your life?
- What’s ONE thing you absolutely want to do before you die?
- With whom would you happily swap your life? And why?
- What makes you laugh whenever you think about it?
- What could you do today to get closer to the person you want to be?
- How do you know that you are feeling good?
- What could other people learn from you?
- What are you grateful for in life, and why?
- How much time do you take just for yourself? Is it enough?
- How open and ready are you for change?
- If you could choose anyone, who would you be?

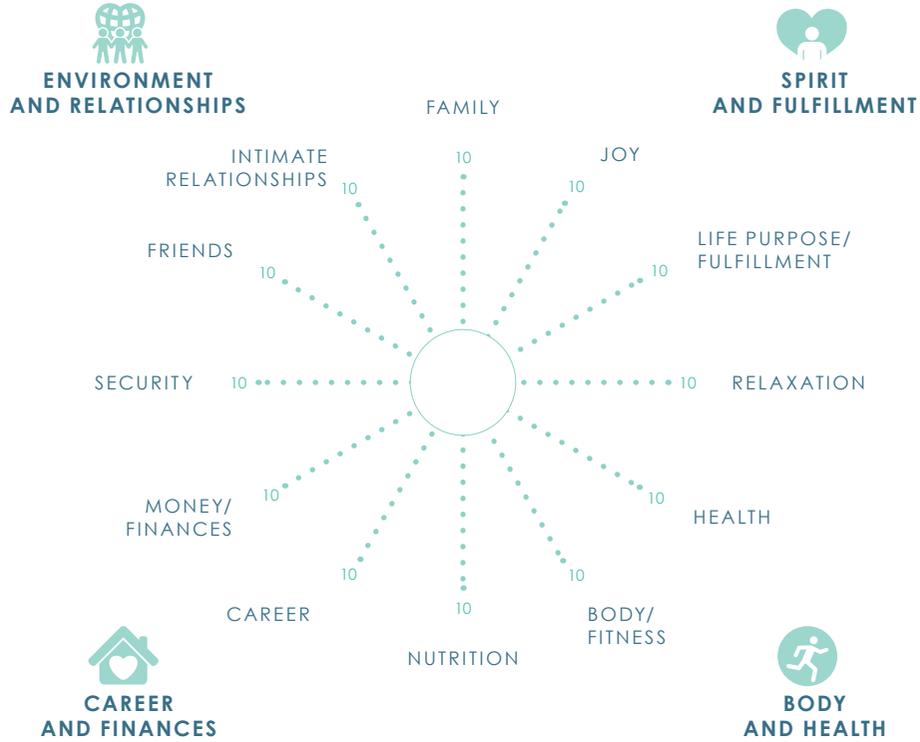
CREATIVE BOX

Draw, write, or stick everything in this box that comes to mind when you think of your desired state of being, aim, or vision of your ideal life.



TAKING STOCK

On a scale of 1 to 10: “How fulfilled do you feel in these areas at present?” Besides this, set a goal that you want to achieve within one year. How it works: Mark the points and connect them, creating a dodecagon. Then take a different-colored pencil and ask yourself: “How good would you like to feel in the various areas?” (goal). This results in a kind of spider’s web that will give you a good overview of your current situation and the one you aspire to.



MATTERS OF THE HEART
 What is most important to you? And why?

WHAT ARE YOU PROUD OF?
 What are your strengths? What are you really good at?

LETTING GO
 What aren't you good at, don't you enjoy and what drains a lot of your energy?

HAPPY MOMENTS



ENVIRONMENT AND RELATIONSHIPS

1. *Kissing my beloved.*
2. *Telling a friend what I appreciate about them.*
- 3.



SPIRIT AND FULFILLMENT

1. *Closing my eyes and dreaming of the sun, sea, and sand for five minutes.*
2. *Going to the movies.*
- 3.



BODY AND HEALTH

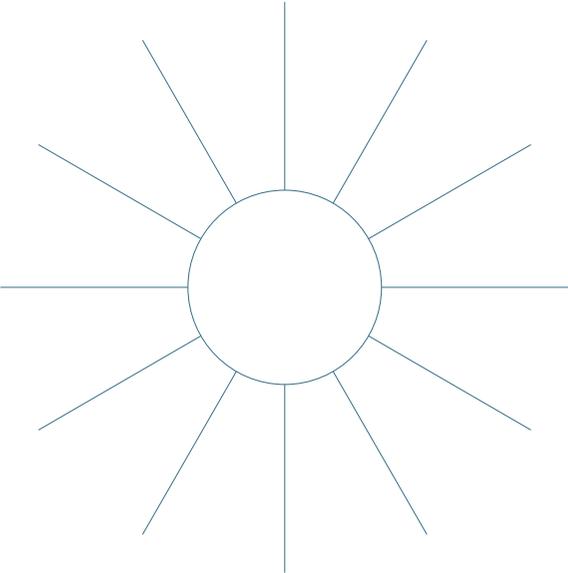
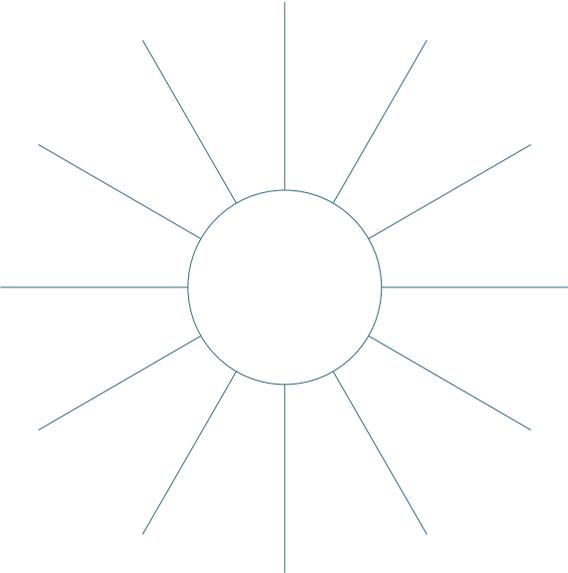
1. *Going for a walk.*
2. *Booking a massage.*
- 3.



CAREER AND FINANCES

1. *Reading a book on a subject I've always been interested in.*
2. *Being grateful for my money the next time I buy something.*
- 3.

FOCUS WHEEL



TRANSFORMATION PLAN

WHAT IS MY GOAL?

What do I want to achieve, have, or be?

WHY DO I WANT IT?

How will it influence my life?

WHEN WILL I HAVE IT?

When do I want to achieve it by?

WHAT IS MY PLAN?

What will I do to achieve my goal?

WHAT IS STOPPING ME?

What habits or fears do I need to overcome?

WHO DO I NEED TO BE?

What thoughts and attitudes do I need to live by?

I am ...

1

2

3

4

3

PLANNER

BEFORE YOU GET STARTED

Always think about the fact that everything you do in life is done with the higher aim

of making you happy!

Of course, there will be times when life doesn't seem to go as you'd hoped. There will also be days when you won't spare this book a glance. Don't worry about it and don't be hard on yourself. Be patient with yourself and simply pick up where you left off. This book wants to support you; it is not there to make you feel guilty. It is important that you keep going and enjoy your successes in the long run.

You can already be proud of yourself! You've read the scientific findings, filled in the toolbox, and defined your goals. That's already a huge step toward fulfilling your vision!

THE ESSENTIALS AT A GLANCE



KEEP YOU POSITIVE
AND MOTIVATED



ENSURE THE RIGHT
PRIORITIES IN YOUR
DAY-TO-DAY LIFE



BRING YOU A STEP
CLOSER TO YOUR VISION

- You will find it easier to make both everyday and important decisions when you have more clarity about yourself, your life, and where you are headed.
- Your self-awareness will lead to self-confidence and will help you to believe in yourself and the path you are following.
- You have limitless potential. Your beliefs and habits have been created. This means you are able to change them.
- Focus on the real you and choose some new “I am” statements.
- If you notice an undesirable thought, imagine a stop sign and consciously choose to think a more positive thought.
- Choose mindfulness. Consciously view difficult situations openly and without making judgments. You will keep your calm and make decisions more consciously.
- Plan happy moments into your day to give you enough energy and keep you motivated for the long haul.
- Be grateful and enjoy the beautiful moments in life. Outsmart the 3:1 ratio and make sure you notice when good things happen during the day.
- Accept failure as a stepping stone on the road to success.
- If you want to change something from negative to positive, start neutral. Draw the focus wheel to help you.
- Define your goals using the SMART criteria, focusing on what you want to achieve.
- Practice visualization regularly: Imagine your desire is already a reality.
- Be patient with yourself. Have fun. Enjoy the journey toward change and look forward to the things to come!

“You will never change your life until you change something you do daily. The secret to success is found in your daily routine.”

John C. Maxwell

YOUR MONTHLY ROUTINE YOUR WEEKLY ROUTINE

Set three goals for yourself at the start of the month. Monthly goals help you to pursue your vision and change your life over the long term. Consider what you are able to do and what beliefs will help you to achieve it. At the end of the month, write down your successes and what you have learned. Reflect on what has given you strength (happy moments) and what you will no longer do (letting go). These insights will help you to set your goals in the coming weeks.



Use your monthly goal to derive your weekly goals. Consider what you can do on each day in order to achieve it. Weekly goals help you to integrate your goals into your daily life and to ensure that you focus on what is truly important. Decide what you want to let go of (no longer do) and where you can draw energy from. Use your monthly insights to help you. Make your successes visible and write down what you are proud of.

YOUR MORNING ROUTINE YOUR EVENING ROUTINE



Start each day by planning your happy moments. It's best to plan them before you get up in the morning so that you can start the day feeling motivated and full of anticipation. Happy feelings give you energy and fuel you to pursue your goals over the long term. Read your daily goal after waking up and picture how you are going to achieve it. Look forward to the day ahead and say “Thank you, thank you, thank you” when getting up.



End each day with mindfulness and gratitude because appreciation and happiness have a reinforcing effect. Direct your attention to the positive things that happened during the day and write down what you are grateful for. If you fall asleep feeling grateful, you will wake up feeling good. Also think about how the expectation of a positive event increases the likelihood of it occurring.

THROUGHOUT THE DAY

Be proud of yourself. You are special and you're taking control of your life. You deserve to be happy and can become the person you want to be. Think about your vision and be happy about the goals you have already achieved and those that still await, each of which will bring you closer to the life you really want. Even if you don't actively do anything about them, it still makes a difference!

HOW TO USE THE WEEKLY PLANNER

THIS IS YOUR WEEKLY GOAL (points to 'WHAT I WANT TO ACHIEVE THIS WEEK')

LET GO OF WHAT DOESN'T MAKE YOU HAPPY (points to 'WHAT I AM LETTING GO OF/ WHAT I WILL NO LONGER DO')

MAKE YOUR SUCCESSES VISIBLE (points to 'I AM PROUD OF MYSELF BECAUSE ...')

SPACE FOR YOUR GOALS, TASKS, AND APPOINTMENTS (points to the left side of the planner)

SUCCESS BAROMETER: HOW SUCCESSFUL/HAPPY YOU ARE (points to the success barometer icons on the left)

PRACTICE MINDFULNESS, RECOGNIZE THE POSITIVE, BE GRATEFUL (points to the 'HAPPY MOMENTS' section)

SPACE FOR YOUR IDEAS, THOUGHTS, VISION, CREATIVITY (points to the 'IDEAS - THOUGHTS - NOTES' column)

DON'T FORGET IMPORTANT DATES (points to 'OTHER DATES/BIRTHDAYS')

NEW INSPIRATION HANDY HINTS FOR A HAPPY LIFE (points to the quote by Louise Hay)

YOUR HAPPINESS LEVEL (points to the 'MY HAPPINESS LEVEL' scale)

WEEK []

WHAT I WANT TO ACHIEVE THIS WEEK (with target icon)

WHAT I AM LETTING GO OF/ WHAT I WILL NO LONGER DO (with balloons icon)

I AM PROUD OF MYSELF BECAUSE ... (with award icon)

MY GOALS (with sub-header 'FOCUS ON THE ESSENTIALS')

HAPPY MOMENTS (with sub-header 'DAILY GRATITUDE')

IDEAS - THOUGHTS - NOTES

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OTHER DATES/BIRTHDAYS (with pencil icon)

*"Life loves you." Louise Hay
 We only accept the amount
 of love that we think we deserve.
 How much do you love yourself?*

MY HAPPINESS LEVEL
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SETTING GOALS FOR THE YEAR

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GOALS



MONTH
GOALS



MONTH
GOALS



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GOALS



MONTH

MY GOALS

TO ACHIEVE MY VISION

WHAT I WANT TO ACHIEVE

WHAT I WILL DO ABOUT IT

GOAL 1

GOAL 2

GOAL 3

MY REFLECTIONS

AND INSIGHTS FROM THIS MONTH

MY THREE GREATEST SUCCESSES

1.

2.

3.

WHAT I COULD HAVE DONE BETTER

1.

2.

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LETTING GO

OF WHAT DOESN'T DO ME ANY GOOD



HAPPY MOMENTS

THAT GIVE ME STRENGTH

MY NEW AFFIRMATIONS FOR THIS MONTH

I am ...

OTHER INSIGHTS/NOTES/CREATIVE IDEAS



MONTH

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OTHER INSIGHTS/NOTES/CREATIVE IDEAS



MY GOALS

HAPPY MOMENTS

FOCUS ON THE ESSENTIALS

DAILY GRATITUDE

MON

TUES

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FRI

SAT

SUN

IDEAS – THOUGHTS – NOTES

OTHER DATES/BIRTHDAYS



Say this to yourself every morning:
 I decide to be happy with myself every day.
 Every morning, I will remember
 that I and I alone can choose to feel good.

MY HAPPINESS LEVEL



MY GOALS

HAPPY MOMENTS

FOCUS ON THE ESSENTIALS

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IDEAS – THOUGHTS – NOTES

OTHER DATES/BIRTHDAYS



“Life loves you.” Louise Hay
We only accept the amount of love
that we think we deserve.
How much do you love yourself?

MY HAPPINESS LEVEL



MY GOALS

HAPPY MOMENTS

FOCUS ON THE ESSENTIALS

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IDEAS – THOUGHTS – NOTES

OTHER DATES/BIRTHDAYS



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Did you know that the burden of unhappiness literally weighs us down when we complain? Don't let complaining weigh you down!

MY HAPPINESS LEVEL



MY GOALS

HAPPY MOMENTS

FOCUS ON THE ESSENTIALS

DAILY GRATITUDE

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IDEAS – THOUGHTS – NOTES

OTHER DATES/BIRTHDAYS



*Four weeks are already up!
Read the first part through again.
Have you gained any new insights?*

MY HAPPINESS LEVEL



MY GOALS

HAPPY MOMENTS

FOCUS ON THE ESSENTIALS

DAILY GRATITUDE

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IDEAS – THOUGHTS – NOTES

OTHER DATES/BIRTHDAYS



*If you are waiting for a sign,
use the next green traffic light you see.
There's no such thing as the perfect time;
any time is the right time
to start your life over!*

MY HAPPINESS LEVEL



MY GOALS

HAPPY MOMENTS

FOCUS ON THE ESSENTIALS

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IDEAS – THOUGHTS – NOTES

OTHER DATES/BIRTHDAYS



Name one thing you absolutely want to do before you die. Write it on a Post-It and stick it to your bathroom mirror.

MY HAPPINESS LEVEL



MY GOALS

HAPPY MOMENTS

FOCUS ON THE ESSENTIALS

DAILY GRATITUDE

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IDEAS – THOUGHTS – NOTES

OTHER DATES/BIRTHDAYS



If you keep all doors open, you'll spend your life in the hallway. This week, close a door that you have been keeping open for a long time.

MY HAPPINESS LEVEL



MY GOALS

HAPPY MOMENTS

FOCUS ON THE ESSENTIALS

DAILY GRATITUDE

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IDEAS – THOUGHTS – NOTES

OTHER DATES/BIRTHDAYS



“Love has nothing to do with what you are expecting to get – only with what you are expecting to give.”
 Katharine Hepburn
 Give someone a compliment this week.

MY HAPPINESS LEVEL



MY GOALS

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FOCUS ON THE ESSENTIALS

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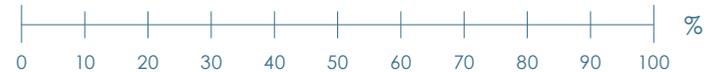
IDEAS – THOUGHTS – NOTES

OTHER DATES/BIRTHDAYS



*Believe in yourself!
If you don't, who will?*

MY HAPPINESS LEVEL





MY GOALS

HAPPY MOMENTS

FOCUS ON THE ESSENTIALS

DAILY GRATITUDE

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IDEAS – THOUGHTS – NOTES

OTHER DATES/BIRTHDAYS



*“Remember that sometimes not getting what you want is a wonderful stroke of luck.” Dalai Lama
Everything comes at the right time and place and happens with the right people, even if you cannot yet see it.*

MY HAPPINESS LEVEL



MY GOALS

HAPPY MOMENTS

FOCUS ON THE ESSENTIALS

DAILY GRATITUDE

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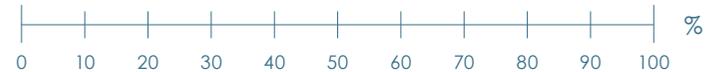
IDEAS – THOUGHTS – NOTES

OTHER DATES/BIRTHDAYS



*Stop thinking about what's not right.
Talk more about what could work.*

MY HAPPINESS LEVEL



MY GOALS

HAPPY MOMENTS

FOCUS ON THE ESSENTIALS

DAILY GRATITUDE

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IDEAS – THOUGHTS – NOTES

OTHER DATES/BIRTHDAYS



Did you know that it is possible to be grateful for disappointments? After all, you have been relieved of false hope. Be grateful for the experience!

MY HAPPINESS LEVEL



MY GOALS

HAPPY MOMENTS

FOCUS ON THE ESSENTIALS

DAILY GRATITUDE

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IDEAS – THOUGHTS – NOTES

OTHER DATES/BIRTHDAYS



*You are unique and have limitless potential.
See yourself as you wish to be.
Tell someone you trust about the future you.*

MY HAPPINESS LEVEL



MY GOALS

HAPPY MOMENTS

FOCUS ON THE ESSENTIALS

DAILY GRATITUDE

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IDEAS – THOUGHTS – NOTES

OTHER DATES/BIRTHDAYS



You can't make everyone happy all of the time. Start by making yourself happy.

MY HAPPINESS LEVEL



MY GOALS

HAPPY MOMENTS

FOCUS ON THE ESSENTIALS

DAILY GRATITUDE

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IDEAS – THOUGHTS – NOTES

OTHER DATES/BIRTHDAYS



Sometimes when you think that life is kicking you around, you may have actually ended up in a better place than you were before.

Trust in life – it's on your side, even if it doesn't always seem that way!

MY HAPPINESS LEVEL



MY GOALS

HAPPY MOMENTS

FOCUS ON THE ESSENTIALS

DAILY GRATITUDE

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IDEAS – THOUGHTS – NOTES

OTHER DATES/BIRTHDAYS



Carefully read through what you wrote in the toolbox. Has anything changed?

MY HAPPINESS LEVEL



MY GOALS

HAPPY MOMENTS

FOCUS ON THE ESSENTIALS

DAILY GRATITUDE

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IDEAS – THOUGHTS – NOTES

OTHER DATES/BIRTHDAYS



*"It is better to enjoy and regret
 than to regret that you have not enjoyed."
 Giovanni Boccaccio*
Treat yourself to something special this week!

MY HAPPINESS LEVEL





MY GOALS

HAPPY MOMENTS

FOCUS ON THE ESSENTIALS

DAILY GRATITUDE

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IDEAS – THOUGHTS – NOTES

OTHER DATES/BIRTHDAYS



Good enough is the new perfect. Value yourself and put yourself and your needs right at the top of your to-do list!

MY HAPPINESS LEVEL



MY GOALS

HAPPY MOMENTS

FOCUS ON THE ESSENTIALS

DAILY GRATITUDE

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IDEAS – THOUGHTS – NOTES

OTHER DATES/BIRTHDAYS



Each week starts off fresh, new, and pure, just waiting to be filled with happiness and love. Look forward, not back!

MY HAPPINESS LEVEL



MY GOALS

HAPPY MOMENTS

FOCUS ON THE ESSENTIALS

DAILY GRATITUDE

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IDEAS – THOUGHTS – NOTES

OTHER DATES/BIRTHDAYS



Read the inspirational questions at the start of the toolbox again. How are you feeling about them now?

MY HAPPINESS LEVEL



MY GOALS

HAPPY MOMENTS

FOCUS ON THE ESSENTIALS

DAILY GRATITUDE

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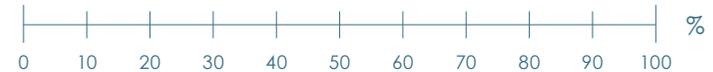
IDEAS – THOUGHTS – NOTES

OTHER DATES/BIRTHDAYS



*Good friends are like stars.
 You can't always see them,
 but you know they're there.
 This week, tell your best friends
 how important they are to you.*

MY HAPPINESS LEVEL



MY GOALS

HAPPY MOMENTS

FOCUS ON THE ESSENTIALS

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IDEAS – THOUGHTS – NOTES

OTHER DATES/BIRTHDAYS



*“You cannot find yourself
 by going into the past.
 You can find yourself by coming
 into the present.” Eckhart Tolle*

MY HAPPINESS LEVEL



MY GOALS

HAPPY MOMENTS

FOCUS ON THE ESSENTIALS

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IDEAS – THOUGHTS – NOTES

OTHER DATES/BIRTHDAYS



You have so many wonderful characteristics that you take for granted. Imagine you are your own best friend and write yourself a thank-you note. What would it say?

MY HAPPINESS LEVEL



MY GOALS

HAPPY MOMENTS

FOCUS ON THE ESSENTIALS

DAILY GRATITUDE

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IDEAS – THOUGHTS – NOTES

OTHER DATES/BIRTHDAYS



“Nothing is more relaxing than accepting whatever comes your way.” Dalai Lama

You can rely on things happening the way they are meant to.

MY HAPPINESS LEVEL



MY GOALS

HAPPY MOMENTS

FOCUS ON THE ESSENTIALS

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IDEAS – THOUGHTS – NOTES

OTHER DATES/BIRTHDAYS



“Everything comes to him who hustles while he waits.” Thomas Edison

You can be proud of yourself: You’ve stuck with it for three months now! Celebrate and treat yourself to something special!

MY HAPPINESS LEVEL



MY GOALS

HAPPY MOMENTS

FOCUS ON THE ESSENTIALS

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IDEAS – THOUGHTS – NOTES

OTHER DATES/BIRTHDAYS



*What are your doubts at the moment?
Use the focus wheel to turn
the negative into positive.*

MY HAPPINESS LEVEL



MY GOALS

HAPPY MOMENTS

FOCUS ON THE ESSENTIALS

DAILY GRATITUDE

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IDEAS – THOUGHTS – NOTES

OTHER DATES/BIRTHDAYS



*“A full diary doesn’t make a fulfilled life.”
Kurt Tucholsky*

The quality of your life depends on how you spend your time. Prioritize not only what you have to do, but also what you want to do.

MY HAPPINESS LEVEL



MY GOALS

HAPPY MOMENTS

FOCUS ON THE ESSENTIALS

DAILY GRATITUDE

MON

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IDEAS – THOUGHTS – NOTES

OTHER DATES/BIRTHDAYS



Not everyone can understand you, and that's OK. Other people have a right to their opinion and you have the right to ignore them.

MY HAPPINESS LEVEL



MY GOALS

HAPPY MOMENTS

FOCUS ON THE ESSENTIALS

DAILY GRATITUDE

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IDEAS – THOUGHTS – NOTES

OTHER DATES/BIRTHDAYS



*If you want to be there for other people,
think about the oxygen mask in an airplane.
You need to make sure you are OK
first before helping others.*

MY HAPPINESS LEVEL



MY GOALS

HAPPY MOMENTS

FOCUS ON THE ESSENTIALS

DAILY GRATITUDE

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IDEAS – THOUGHTS – NOTES

OTHER DATES/BIRTHDAYS



*Refresh your memory by re-reading
The Essentials at a Glance.
Could you still remember everything?*

MY HAPPINESS LEVEL



MY GOALS

HAPPY MOMENTS

FOCUS ON THE ESSENTIALS

DAILY GRATITUDE

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IDEAS – THOUGHTS – NOTES

OTHER DATES/BIRTHDAYS



“When you buy something, you’re not paying money for it. You’re paying with the hours of your life you had to spend earning that money.” José Mujica

Be mindful of how you spend your money this week.

MY HAPPINESS LEVEL



MY GOALS

HAPPY MOMENTS

FOCUS ON THE ESSENTIALS

DAILY GRATITUDE

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IDEAS – THOUGHTS – NOTES

OTHER DATES/BIRTHDAYS



*“Allow your smile to change the world.
Never let the world change your smile.”
Sri Sri Ravi Shankar*

MY HAPPINESS LEVEL



MY GOALS

HAPPY MOMENTS

FOCUS ON THE ESSENTIALS

DAILY GRATITUDE

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IDEAS – THOUGHTS – NOTES

OTHER DATES/BIRTHDAYS



*If someone accuses you of being egotistical,
this means that they don't
want you to deal with your own
business any more, but with theirs.
So, who's the egotist now?*

MY HAPPINESS LEVEL



MY GOALS

HAPPY MOMENTS

FOCUS ON THE ESSENTIALS

DAILY GRATITUDE

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IDEAS – THOUGHTS – NOTES

OTHER DATES/BIRTHDAYS



*Stop hating yourself for what you are not.
 Start loving yourself for what you are.
 Write down five things
 that you love about yourself.*

MY HAPPINESS LEVEL



MY GOALS

HAPPY MOMENTS

FOCUS ON THE ESSENTIALS

DAILY GRATITUDE

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IDEAS – THOUGHTS – NOTES

OTHER DATES/BIRTHDAYS



*Whom can you learn something from?
Spend some time with them.*

MY HAPPINESS LEVEL



MY GOALS

HAPPY MOMENTS

FOCUS ON THE ESSENTIALS

DAILY GRATITUDE

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IDEAS – THOUGHTS – NOTES

OTHER DATES/BIRTHDAYS



*Practice mindfulness:
This week, commit to being particularly
mindful of your thoughts.*

MY HAPPINESS LEVEL



MY GOALS

HAPPY MOMENTS

FOCUS ON THE ESSENTIALS

DAILY GRATITUDE

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IDEAS – THOUGHTS – NOTES

OTHER DATES/BIRTHDAYS



*Using today to complain about yesterday
won't make tomorrow any better.
Focus on the positive moments in your life.*

MY HAPPINESS LEVEL



MY GOALS

HAPPY MOMENTS

FOCUS ON THE ESSENTIALS

DAILY GRATITUDE

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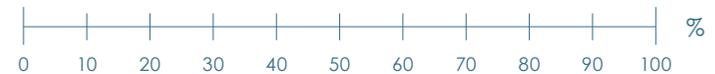
IDEAS – THOUGHTS – NOTES

OTHER DATES/BIRTHDAYS



*No matter what is in your past,
your future is flawless.
Every day, you have the opportunity
to start over!*

MY HAPPINESS LEVEL



MY GOALS

HAPPY MOMENTS

FOCUS ON THE ESSENTIALS

DAILY GRATITUDE

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IDEAS – THOUGHTS – NOTES

OTHER DATES/BIRTHDAYS



Don't take the road well-traveled this week; choose a new route – to work, for example.

MY HAPPINESS LEVEL



MY GOALS

HAPPY MOMENTS

FOCUS ON THE ESSENTIALS

DAILY GRATITUDE

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IDEAS – THOUGHTS – NOTES

OTHER DATES/BIRTHDAYS



Carefully read through what you wrote in the toolbox. Does it still apply?

MY HAPPINESS LEVEL



MY GOALS

HAPPY MOMENTS

FOCUS ON THE ESSENTIALS

DAILY GRATITUDE

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IDEAS – THOUGHTS – NOTES

OTHER DATES/BIRTHDAYS



“The best way to predict the future is to invent it.” Alan Kay
Draw your future in the ideas box on the right.

MY HAPPINESS LEVEL



MY GOALS

HAPPY MOMENTS

FOCUS ON THE ESSENTIALS

DAILY GRATITUDE

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IDEAS – THOUGHTS – NOTES

OTHER DATES/BIRTHDAYS



*Being happy doesn't mean
having the best of everything, it means
making the best of everything.
This week, be particularly grateful
for what you have.*

MY HAPPINESS LEVEL



MY GOALS

HAPPY MOMENTS

FOCUS ON THE ESSENTIALS

DAILY GRATITUDE

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IDEAS – THOUGHTS – NOTES

OTHER DATES/BIRTHDAYS



Don't let yourself be defined by your past. It is an experience you had, not a path for life.

MY HAPPINESS LEVEL



MY GOALS

HAPPY MOMENTS

FOCUS ON THE ESSENTIALS

DAILY GRATITUDE

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IDEAS – THOUGHTS – NOTES

OTHER DATES/BIRTHDAYS



*Life is not a problem to be solved;
it's an adventure to be lived.
Enjoy it!*

MY HAPPINESS LEVEL



MY GOALS

HAPPY MOMENTS

FOCUS ON THE ESSENTIALS

DAILY GRATITUDE

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IDEAS – THOUGHTS – NOTES

OTHER DATES/BIRTHDAYS



“Nothing brings us further away from the path to happiness than listening to idle chatter instead of our own beliefs.” Lucius Seneca

MY HAPPINESS LEVEL



MY GOALS

HAPPY MOMENTS

FOCUS ON THE ESSENTIALS

DAILY GRATITUDE

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IDEAS – THOUGHTS – NOTES

OTHER DATES/BIRTHDAYS



Did you know that life is a journey and you will never feel as though you have arrived? So, enjoy the journey!

MY HAPPINESS LEVEL



MY GOALS

HAPPY MOMENTS

FOCUS ON THE ESSENTIALS

DAILY GRATITUDE

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IDEAS – THOUGHTS – NOTES

OTHER DATES/BIRTHDAYS



Have you ever successfully convinced someone of your opinion in an argument?
Probably not.
So save your energy in future and use it for something that makes you feel good.

MY HAPPINESS LEVEL



MY GOALS

HAPPY MOMENTS

FOCUS ON THE ESSENTIALS

DAILY GRATITUDE

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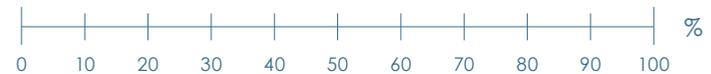
IDEAS – THOUGHTS – NOTES

OTHER DATES/BIRTHDAYS



*Celebrate your successes of the past few weeks.
 You've done great work! Be proud
 of yourself and treat yourself to something nice!
 What about another The New You?*

MY HAPPINESS LEVEL



MY GOALS

HAPPY MOMENTS

FOCUS ON THE ESSENTIALS

DAILY GRATITUDE

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IDEAS – THOUGHTS – NOTES

OTHER DATES/BIRTHDAYS



Let it go! Don't hold on to a mistake just because you've already spent so much time with it. Don't get frustrated. Just let it go, take the experience with you, and continue on your path.

MY HAPPINESS LEVEL



MY GOALS

HAPPY MOMENTS

FOCUS ON THE ESSENTIALS

DAILY GRATITUDE

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IDEAS – THOUGHTS – NOTES

OTHER DATES/BIRTHDAYS



Just because everything is a drama for some people doesn't mean that you have to attend the performance. Contemplate your own thoughts and consciously decide how you should react to the situation.

MY HAPPINESS LEVEL



MY GOALS

HAPPY MOMENTS

FOCUS ON THE ESSENTIALS

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IDEAS – THOUGHTS – NOTES

OTHER DATES/BIRTHDAYS



“Holding onto anger is like drinking poison and expecting the other person to die.” Buddha

What things are you annoyed about that you will now let go of?

MY HAPPINESS LEVEL



MY GOALS

HAPPY MOMENTS

FOCUS ON THE ESSENTIALS

DAILY GRATITUDE

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IDEAS – THOUGHTS – NOTES

OTHER DATES/BIRTHDAYS



“Happiness belongs to the self sufficient.”

Aristotle

Wow, you’ve experienced 52 weeks of happy moments, gratitude, and success!

What a great life you have!

What a wonderful person you are!

MY HAPPINESS LEVEL

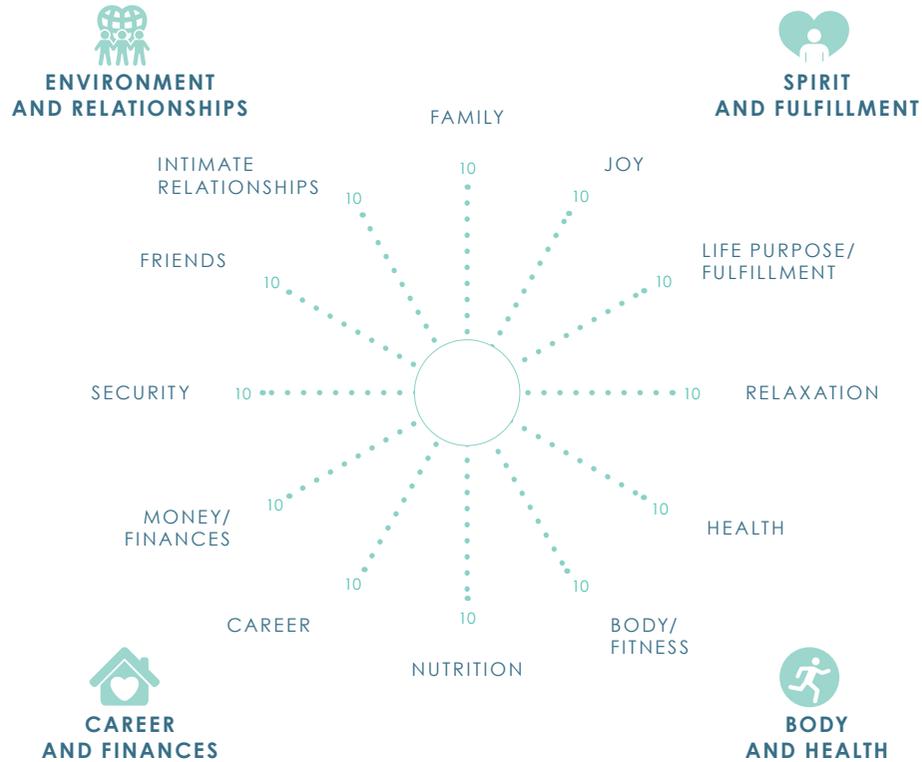


4

THE YEAR
IN REVIEW

TAKING STOCK

Where are you now in the different life areas? How fulfilled are you? How good do you feel? Mark the points and connect them. Maybe use another color to better compare them with the old chart.



FOCUS TOPIC
 Where are you today with your specific topic? What has changed?

WHAT HAS CHANGED?
 Compared to last year?

WHAT HAVE I LEARNED?
 What will help me in the future?

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