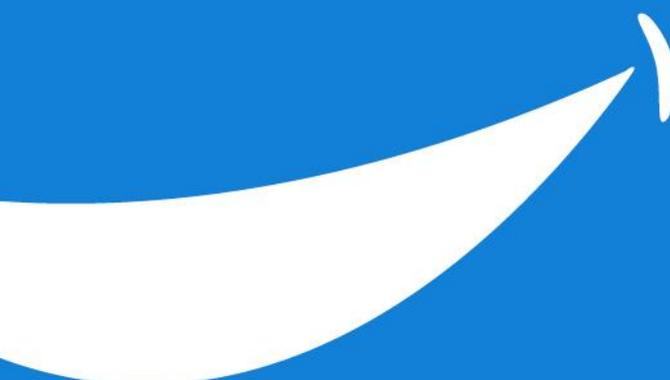


HAPPINESS NOW!

A GUIDED
JOURNEY



Unleash motivation and take
action to experience greater
peace, meaning and joy.

Activity booklet

SONIA WEYERS, PhD

Dear reader,

Thank you very much for checking out my book! I truly and deeply hope that reading it and following its recommendations will lead you to a better quality of life.

I have created this booklet so that you can print it out to take notes when I prompt you to do so and note your observations when you try the activities.

I wish you a wonderful journey to YOUR HAPPINESS NOW!

Sonia Weyers, PhD

PART I



Mindset

CHAPTER I



Finding Motivation

Why?

First, ask yourself, “Why?” Why do you want to embark on this journey?
What led you to pick up this book?

What?

Second, you must ask yourself, "What?" What do you want to get out of reading this book? What is your objective? What are you yearning for that you don't have yet? Take a few moments to dive into that a bit more. What, specifically, do you want to improve in your life?

Why Now?

Lastly, in determining your motivation, ask yourself, “Why now?” What happened that caused you to pick up this book now? Was there an event that triggered your quest for a stronger well-being, or have you had a lingering feeling for a while? Spend a few moments now to reflect on this.

CHAPTER 2



Commitment

It is time to ask yourself a hard question. Can you commit to trying out what I propose to you in this book? How much time can you commit every day to the pursuit of your own well-being?

Think about that, please!

Can you think of a few examples of commitments you have kept? Can you think of at least 2 or 3?

Now can you think of a couple of examples where you didn't honor your commitments? Can you remember what happened? Was there an incident that propelled the breach or was it sort of negligence, did it slip your mind, did you not pay proper attention?

CHAPTER 3



Beliefs

In chapter 1, you looked at your objectives for reading this book. Now I invite you to prepare to think differently about beliefs. If you think about the changes that you want to bring upon your life at this time, what beliefs would support that? Think about that for a moment. I strongly suggest that you include something like “I have what it takes to improve my quality of life.”

If you are new to this exercise, it may be easier to think of someone else who already has what you want. What might they believe? Try to put yourself in the shoes of someone who already has made the changes you want in your life.

Take a moment to formulate and write down some of the beliefs that would support the life you dream of:

I recommend that for the moment you choose affirmations that reflect the beliefs you identified above, that support the goals you have for this book. Try to pick 2 or 3 affirmations at this point.

- Affirmation 1:

- Affirmation 2:

- Affirmation 3:

CHAPTER 4



Perseverance

What do YOU need when the going gets rough? Take some time now and think about how a well-intentioned person could best support you in a way that would motivate you to stay the course.

Your needs:

CHAPTER 5



Creating your Future

As you embark on Part II, it is useful to refocus on why you are reading this book in the first place. This is your ultimate motivation, your goal. Write down your goal in the space below and fold the corner of the page, figuratively if you are reading the e-book. I invite you to look at it every time you pick up this book.

Your Goal:

PART II



Areas of Focus

CHAPTER 6



Your Physical Health

1: Food

Please put the book down and take 10 minutes to think about the following 3 questions,.

1. Do I know what is in the food that I eat?
2. Am I eating a diet that supports my health?
3. Can I think of three actions I can take in the next week to improve the health of my diet?

2: Exercise

To end this section on exercise, please take a few moments to ask yourself the following diagnostic questions:

1. Am I exercising at all at the moment?
2. If yes
 - a. Am I exercising with enough regularity?
 - b. Am I getting a good mix of aerobic exercise and strength training?
3. If no
 - a. Can I identify how come I don't?
 - b. Can I think of ways to do at least a little bit of exercise?

3: Sleep

Sleep is a crucial part of self-care. To determine if you are getting enough sleep, note whether you can wake up without an alarm clock and answer the following questions:

- How many days a week do I wake up before my alarm goes off?
- How many days a week do I feel rested enough to go about my habitual activities comfortably?
- How many times per week do I reach for a stimulant, coffee for example, as a pick-me-up?
- How many times per week do I find myself snapping at someone or over-reacting in some way? Could it be that lack of sleep is the culprit?

CHAPTER 7



Your Emotional Health

Emotions and Feelings.

Feeling them!

Exercise: Please take 20 to 30 minutes to do the following exercise. Think of a different situation for each of the following emotions. Let a situation come to your mind that leads you to feel the emotion, stay with that image for a couple of minutes, and notice how this emotion is manifesting in your body. You may wish to take a few notes in the space below for each emotion.

1. Joy

2. Anger

3. Sadness

4. Fear

5. Cheerfulness

6. Contentment

Meet your diaphragm!

Do you know where your diaphragm is? To locate it, find the lowest part of your sternum and place your thumb right below that. Did you find it? Keep your thumb there.

Now I invite you to take three deep breaths while keeping your thumb on your diaphragm. As you inhale, see if you can push against your thumb, and as you exhale, feel your thumb go back down. Take three deep breaths in this way. If you have really found your diaphragm, you will almost certainly find that even three breaths have had an impact and that you feel more serene.

CHAPTER 8



Relationships

Taking stock

Given how important social contact is to humans, it is time now to ask yourself how socially connected you feel. I recommend that you take a few minutes right now, that you set a timer for five minutes, close your eyes, and reflect on your connectedness.

CHAPTER 9



Spirituality and Meaning

Inspiration

So what would you answer to the “What for” question? What are some of your beliefs about why we are here, what our purpose is?

Beauty

I encourage you, at the very next available opportunity, which may be right now, to go and interact with any amount of nature for five minutes. Just be with nature for five short minutes and just pay attention to how you feel.

How was that? Do you feel more connected or more grounded?

Self-Realization

You may have a sense of your purpose already, but if you don't, I suggest that you take set a timer for ten minutes and start writing "what I most wish to accomplish in this lifetime is..." and just write whatever comes to you. If you feel stuck and nothing is coming to you, start writing anything—your shopping list, a letter to a friend, anything that can make you start writing.

Causes

Do you have a favorite cause that you engage with? Actions you take in the name of something you consider a worthy goal?

What cause can you engage with that will bring YOU joy?

PART III



Getting into Action

CHAPTER 10



It's Time!

In this part of the book, you will take it to the next level. For each chapter from Part II, I invite you to ask yourself:

- “How satisfied am I with where I am in this area of my life?”

How satisfied are you with:

- Your Physical Health?

- Your Emotional Health?

- Your Relationships?

- Your Spirituality and Sense of Meaning?

CHAPTER II



Morning, Evening, and Sleep

Morning Routines

Activity #1: Take some time now to craft a morning routine that you would like to try. Then try it. Then try it again. Try it seven days in a row to give yourself time to see how it is working for you.

Evening routines

Activity #2: Take some time now to craft a nighttime routine that you would like to try. Then try it. Then try it again. As I keep telling you, I recommend that you give yourself a full seven days before deciding if you like it or not!

Sleeping habits

Activity #3:

1. Go to bed 30 minutes earlier tonight than you usually do.
2. Don't change your alarm.
3. Notice if you wake up before your alarm.
 - a. If you do, you have found your night length.
 - b. If not, go to bed 30 more minutes earlier tomorrow night.
 - c. Repeat until you wake up before your alarm.
4. Take stock of your sleep needs.

Activity #4: Take three or four slow full breaths, in and out, as I just described. The diaphragm goes around so if you put your hands on your rib cage, you can feel the ribcage open as you breathe in and close as you breathe out.

What difference do you feel after doing this? Make a note of how it has affected you. It is a very easy, very portable, very accessible tool for stress-reduction.

CHAPTER 12



Exercise

Activity #5: Decide on two plans of action that will improve your relationship to exercise.

Examples are:

1. Find a buddy and schedule three walks next week with them.
2. Sign-up for a gym and make an appointment with the trainer there.
3. Decide to walk for five or ten minutes at lunch time and put a reminder on your phone.

What are your plans of action? Decide this right now and then write in Table 1 when you will take your chosen actions.

CHAPTER 13



Food

WHY might you want to eat a healthier diet?

Is it so that you are better able to keep up with your kids? Is it so you can have a better time with your partner? Is it to enhance your willpower? Would it enable you do your job better? What is *your* 'WHY' for wanting to be healthier? Take ten minutes right now to clarify that. Start writing: "I want to get healthier because..." and see what comes next.

Eat organic produce as much as possible

Activity #6: Decide which foods you want to start buying organic.

Reduce sugar!

Activity #7: Identify one to three sugar-related habits that you will change, for better health and willpower.

Adjust your meat consumption

Activity #8: Do you wish to change your meat consumption? Take some time to ponder this. If you do, how will you do it?

CHAPTER 14



Practices for a Positive Mindset

Breathing into the present moment

Activity #9: Schedule one-minute of focused breathing twice a day for seven days, and then do it! At the end of seven days, note how you like it.

Gratitude

Activity #10: Next time you feel that an unpleasant emotion has a strong hold on you, look for something in your life you feel really grateful for and bring up the feeling of gratefulness.

Activity #11: Schedule 15 minutes in the next week to write about three things you are grateful for from the previous week. Be very specific in your descriptions and feel gratefulness blossom in your chest.

Forgiveness

Activity #12:

Start by thinking of a situation in which you feel wronged, you feel like someone has done you some harm that you are not able to forgive, to let go of. There are 9 steps.

1. The first step is to become intimately familiar with how you feel about what happened. Do you feel sad? Do you feel angry? Do you think it was unfair?

Try to clarify the way in which you feel wronged and the emotional impact it is having on you. Then you can tell a few trusted people about your experience.

2. Make a commitment to yourself to feel better. Remember that forgiveness is for you, to free yourself of these unpleasant feelings you are harboring.
3. Realize that forgiveness does not necessarily imply reconciliation with people who offended you nor does it mean condoning their actions; rather, your aim is to blame the offenders less and take their offenses less personally.
4. Become aware of what is happening: you are distressed over the hurt feelings and thoughts you are having at this time. You are not actually hurting from what happened then.
5. When the upset feelings are too much, it is important to soothe yourself. You can do the diaphragm exercise, do some deep breathing, and/or go into nature, whatever works best for you.
6. If you do not have the power to make something happen, it is best to give up expecting it. You might have been demanding something from the person who hurt you that they were not willing or able to give you. This causes suffering.

Remind yourself that you can hope for and work hard for what you want, but you may not have the power to make it happen.

7. Focus on finding a way to get your positive goals met other than through the experience that has hurt you.

8. Realize that a life well-lived is your best revenge. If you focus on your wounded feelings, you give power to the person who has caused you pain. Instead of that, look for the beautiful things around you such as love, beauty and kindness.

Put your energy into appreciating what you have rather than focusing on what you do not have.

9. Include your heroic choice to forgive in the way you look at your past.

Self-compassion

Activity #13: Choose a phrase for each part of self-compassion: mindfulness, common humanity, and self-kindness and write them down below. Use it next time you are falling short of your expectation. Notice how that feels.

Mindfulness:

Common humanity:

Self-kindness:

Visualization – The Hindsight Window

Activity #14:

1. Pick an event or situation that you are currently struggling with.
2. Ask yourself, “Why might I be grateful for this one day?”
3. Ask yourself again, “Why might I be grateful for this one day?”
4. Ask yourself yet again, “Why might I be grateful for this one day?”
5. When you begin to find answers to this question, you will have a new perspective on what is happening to you, and you will see that it will be OK.

CHAPTER 15



Self-Care Practices

Activity#15: Find five self-care activities that appeal to you. Schedule them. Find an accountability partner and let them know what you are doing.

I will do:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

On: (date and time)

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

My accountability partner is:

CHAPTER 16



Social Life

Activity #16: Schedule one activity with one member of each of the three categories: Friends, Family, and Social groups.

Friends:

Who? _____

Where? _____

What? _____

When? _____

Family:

Who? _____

Where? _____

What? _____

When? _____

Social group:

Who? _____

Where? _____

What? _____

When? _____

Activity #17: Schedule a generous act, do it and feel the impact.

For whom?

What?

When?

How was it?

CHAPTER 17



Spiritual Practices

Meditation

Activity #18: Experiment with a formal contemplative practice.

Connecting with Nature

Activity #19: Breathe in some nature and reflect on how it all came about. Notice how you feel.

Visualization

Activity #20: Set aside 15 minutes, make yourself comfortable in a quiet place, and visualize your ideal world. Write for 15 minutes if you prefer that.

Notice how you feel afterwards.

Activity #21: Practice the Metta meditation described here.

May I be safe and protected,

May I be happy and peaceful,

May I be healthy and strong,

May I live with ease, and

May I be held, in loving kindness

After directing the loving-kindness to yourself, bring to mind someone whom you feel warmly towards and direct the well-wishes to them. It may be easier if you bring up an image of them in your mind's eye.

May you be safe and protected,

May you be happy and peaceful,

May you be healthy and strong,

May you live with ease, and

May you be held, in loving kindness.

As you continue with this meditation, you will direct the well-wishes to other people.

Next you will direct them to someone you feel neutral towards, maybe someone you barely know.

After that, direct them to someone you have difficulty with.

You end the meditation by sending loving kindness to all living beings:

May we be safe and protected,

May we be happy and peaceful,

May we be healthy and strong,

May we live with ease, and

May we be held, in loving kindness.

How did that feel? Did you learn anything new?

CHAPTER 18



Your New Goals and Habits

Activity #22: Define your priority goals.

For my physical health, my top goal is:

For my emotional health, my top goal is:

For my relationships, my top goal is:

Regarding spirituality and meaning, my top goal is:

Activity #23: Create your Action Plan.

Using your notes from your notebook and from Table 1, ask yourself the following two questions for each activity:

1. Did this activity make me feel more peace, meaning or joy?
2. How can this activity contribute to my goals?

Let the answers to these two questions guide you to select up to three actions per goal. You can write down your plan below, in your notebook or you could type it up and frame it somewhere prominent, whatever you think makes it most likely that you will follow through.

GOAL I:

– Action 1:

– Action 2:

– Action 3:

GOAL II:

– Action 1:

– Action 2:

– Action 3:

GOAL III:

– Action 1:

– Action 2:

– Action 3:

GOAL IV:

– Action 1:

– Action 2:

– Action 3:

TABLE 1:

	<u>Activity :</u>	<u>When :</u>	<u>Observations</u>
1	Morning Routine		
2	Evening Routine		
3	Sleep Needs		
4	Diaphragm Breaths		
5	Exercise Plans		
6	Organic Foods		
7	Sugar Reduction		
8	Meat Consumption		
9	Focused Breathing		
10	Gratitude as a tool		
11	Gratitude practice		

12	Self-compassion phrases		
13	Forgiveness		
14	Hindsight window		
15	Self-Care x 5		
16	Social life		
17	Generosity		
18	Contemplative practice		
19	Nature		
20	Visualization		
21	Metta meditation		
22	Priority goals		
23	Action plan		