

WAKE UP!

You're Alive, But
Are You Living?

*40 simple self-care rituals for a healthy,
abundant, and purposeful life*

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Portland, ME

Wake Up! You're Alive, But Are You Living?
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Dear Reader

This book represents the opinions and ideas of the author. The intention is to inspire you to reflect on behaviors, thought-patterns, beliefs, and habits that may be holding you back from achieving a healthier, more fulfilled existence. In no way does the author intend to undermine or fix your personal struggles.

The content of this book is for general instruction only. Each person's physical, emotional, and spiritual condition is unique. The instruction in this book is not intended to replace or interrupt your relationship with a physician or other professional. Please consult your doctor for matters pertaining to your specific health and diet.

This book is dedicated to my Nanny, who has never let me forget that I am exactly who I am meant to be and that I have a unique gift to offer the world. Nanny, your unwavering encouragement and support has helped me through the best and most challenging of times. You remind me to care for myself, slow down, and lighten up, and have never let me forget that I can do anything I put my mind to. Divine Order. I love you.

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Lastly, my gratitude and affection goes out to all of my readers and clients for finding value in the wisdom that I have been so blessed to acquire in my life.

With love and appreciation, Allie

Foreword

For years, I struggled to maintain health and balance in my life. I would experience it here and there, and sense it deep down, but failed to sustain a consistent flow of regenerative lifestyle practices. While I strive to be a catalyst for positive and bold change in the world, my capacity to do so was undermined by a fundamental disconnect between my awareness and my actions. Thin-skinned, my core was shaken by the plight of others—and the planet.

To cope, I fell back on unhealthy habits like over consumption and began sacrificing my personal commitments for others. Feelings of shame and fatigue left me feeling crummy about myself all over again, perpetuating a negative feedback loop that did not align with my core values.

Working with Allie as a friend, coach and mentor has taught me to recognize old patterns as they arise and reinvest my energy in daily self-care practices. Through reciting daily affirmations and practicing the self-care techniques laid out in this book at my own pace, I am now able to rebound to a state of balance much quicker. Today, I feel more grounded in my body, my mind and my values. As Allie has illustrated through the wisdom laid out in this book, we cannot heal the wounds of the world until we first heal the wounds within ourselves. We can and must

replenish natural and human systems and resources. It has become a moral obligation, and it starts with our personal stories.

It also starts with our choices.

To change self-limiting beliefs, I had to change my actions, and as I did, my beliefs transformed. All of a sudden, old story lines, impulse cravings, fear and judgments became obsolete. I didn't realize how much I had to gain until I created space for my own health to blossom. It was the courage to be honest with myself about who I am—and the life I aspire to lead—that opened the door for the life I now live. I feel like I am finally living in alignment with my life's purpose and path. As Allie conveys in each practice and affirmation, the propensity for awakening to our life's purpose exists within each one of us.

The key to activating abundant health lies in each moment through breath, clarity, and conviction.

This self-care guide offers a step-by-step path to follow in order to show up for your life each day with natural energy. The simple and advanced practices enclosed will support you in building a strong foundation to help you achieve optimal health and reach your goals. Practical tools and exercises will help you sharpen your ability to detect imbalance and overcome self-sabotage, shift your relationship with food, and take control of your personal stories. With courage and honesty, Allie Andrews weaves together a tapestry of accessible insights that can exist together, or independently—that meet you wherever you are and accelerate positive feedback loops within yourself and the world.

Sierra Flanigan
Director of Campus Sustainability &
Social Innovation at EcoMotion, Inc

*“Integrity is wholeness...
The wholeness of life and things.
The divine beauty of the universe.
Love that, not man apart from that.”*
-Robinson Jeffers

Introduction

“It's not what we do once in a while that shapes our lives. It's what we do consistently.”

-Anthony Robbins

I am so excited to share with you the tools that support my health, integrity, inner fulfillment, and sense of purpose. This book is written with firm self-awareness and an underlying belief that I control my destiny. The sense of control, self-awareness, and vitality that I feel has not always been so inherent. It took—and continues to take—daily practice to remain in this grounded place.

My hope is that this book guides you to feel more in control of your health and more alive. With daily practice we create a positive feedback loop in which our behaviors fuel our health and our health fuels our behaviors. We spiral into control.

Throughout the past few years, I have transformed into my healthiest self in mind and body. While I have always valued health, my actions did not consistently align with this value. Prior to my transformation, my confidence was low and sense of purpose nil. Most of the time, I was asleep for my life, anticipating the next distraction while disconnected from my true self and purpose.

At times I would eat healthfully, at times I would deprive myself, and at times I would turn to unhealthy

foods and behaviors for satisfaction and distraction. My well-being was not consistent. Upon reflection, I realize that there was an underlying dissatisfaction; a void that I was masking with instant gratification, only to leave me feeling more dissatisfied later on. I did not feel in control. I was not awake to what brought me sustained enjoyment and fulfillment. I was not even close to living my fullest potential.

Now, I am someone who has made a decision to value and take care of my health every single day for the rest of my life. After significant reflection about what triggered this shift, I realized that the daily self-care practices described herein allowed me the space and time to investigate my dissatisfaction, change my mind, cultivate belief in myself, and be proactive.

I know that when I am not doing something in favor of my health every day—whether meditation, intentional breathing, eating a healthy meal, spending time with people who bring me up, fueling my passion, counting my blessings—I am less in control of my reality, and thus my destiny.

This book is not about my journey, but about the rituals that have supported me, and will continue to support me, in identifying and achieving my definition of success and optimal health.

The self-care practices described in this book are not my own, but a conglomerate of traditions and teachings that I have been blessed to acquire in my life. They are here to guide you toward achieving and maintaining *your* version of success and optimal health. When practiced persistently, the simple tools in this book can provide a nourishing foundation for total health and inner peace in a culture that values external gains and tells us that we must

always be seeking more.

What is Self-Care?

Self-care is an expression of self-love. It encompasses any deliberate action taken by an individual to uphold and enhance their health and well being. My experiences and education have taught me that health is individual—what supports my health, may be different than what supports yours—and multidimensional—it needs to be nurtured on multiple levels. Thus, self-care is not only about taking care of our bodies, but on a deeper level it is getting to know ourselves—tuning into and making time for the behaviors, activities, rituals, foods, environments, people, thoughts, and beliefs that support our health and personal development. The self-care practices in this book work on both the body and the mind.

The Wisdom of Yoga

Yoga is to gain mastery over the mind.

-Patanjali, Yoga Sutras (400 CE)

Much of the insight provided in this book stems from the wisdom of yoga, an Indian tradition dating back at least 5,000 years. Today, there are many definitions, branches, and translations of this ancient tradition, including the definition above. However, the underlying paradigm remains: yoga is self-realization. The yogic tradition provides us with a path along which we can fulfill our potential and get more enjoyment out of life. Along the way, we adopt practices that help us remain gracious, present, and focused in our day-to-day life. Although often

misunderstood as a series of physical postures, yoga is a lifestyle that supports and unites the whole person (mind, body, soul and spirit).

I have been acquiring this yogic wisdom for over eleven years and the most important lesson I've learned is that regular practice pays off. It wasn't until I started practicing consistently—not just asana (posture), but pranayama (controlling the flow of vital life force energy with the breath), meditation, shatkarma (cleansing practices for the body)—that the concept of yoga as a lifestyle started to make sense to me.

Overtime, I transformed from someone who was lacking confidence and easily ruffled, into someone who is secure, resilient, patient, calm, and present for my life. I finally felt what the ancient yogic text, *The Yoga Sutras* by Patanjali, tries to communicate: *Sthira Sukham Asanam* (steadiness, ease, presence of mind)—a sense of strength and control, with an underlying lightness, effortlessness, and the ability to let go.

I share all of this to communicate the importance of staying true to your practice and true to yourself—once you figure out what works for you, stick with it. Notice what arises when you waiver, and then get right back to your practice.

“Yoga is 99% practice and 1% theory.”

—Sri K. Pattabhi Jois

The powerful reality of this statement cannot be realized until experienced. And the transformative benefits of ritualistic self-care cannot be appreciated or fulfilled until the practices are integrated with diligence and awareness. Daily practice is the key to lasting

transformation and self-realization.

How to Use This Book

I have tried to make this book as simple, short, and to the point as possible. I want you to stop reading about self-care and start doing it, today. Adopt these rituals slowly, methodically, and with great awareness for what you are experiencing in mind and body as you integrate them into your day.

The sequence of rituals is fitting: the practices toward the beginning are simple and designed to lay a foundation for those that follow. For someone who is already taking intentional action in favor of their health daily, feel free to jump around and pick the activities that resonate with you. As you perform these rituals, observe your sensory experiences, your breath, and your thoughts. Be aware of any resistance that arises, both as you read and as you practice. In the beginning, shifting your thoughts and behaviors will likely feel forced, but in time the fruits of your diligence will begin to radiate throughout your entire being.

I cannot tell you how to nurture yourself in order to realize your potential, but I can offer you a list of daily practices that can bring you closer to identifying what you need to do to be your best self. I hope the sequence of practices herein guide you toward discovering what you are capable of.

Affirmations

Each chapter starts with an affirmation. An affirmation is an assertive, present-tense statement of something as fact.

Usually spoken as *I am* or *I have* statements, affirmations are powerful tools to shift your thinking, cultivate belief in yourself, and create the present and the future that you want.

Affirmations are a self-care practice in and of themselves. They can be whispered silently, each day, maybe on repeat. At first, you may not believe the affirmation, and this is a completely normal reaction of the ego (one dimension of the self that can hold significant power and have skewed perceptions of reality). But as you repeat the affirmation, visualize the outcome, and remain present for what arises, eventually the affirmation will begin to sound more like truth (for guidance see Self-Awareness Exercise 1, page 16). You will move from incredulity to wavering belief, from wavering belief to commitment, from commitment to certainty, and before you know it, that which you have affirmed has been manifested.

* * * * *

Health does not have to feel ascetic. Taking care of our minds and bodies does not have to feel like a burden, we do not have to feel deprived. Once we start cultivating positivity and health through daily practice, we have less time for thoughts, behaviors, and foods that do not support our well-being and success. And then something truly remarkable starts happening; when viewing the world through a lens of health and self-awareness, we are more satisfied with our life and no longer feel the need to distract ourselves with behaviors and foods that deplete our well being. Our taste buds wake up and nutritious food tastes better than junk food. Health-promoting behaviors

become an integral part of our daily life. We are resilient; when we get off track, we are aware and jump right back on with a sense of eager acceptance and ease. We are less distracted by lethargy, brain fog, angst, perceived failures, and self-sabotage. We are more present for our life and those in it. We wake up and feel more alive.

Before journeying into the specific self-care practices laid out in this book, Chapter One will guide you through developing awareness for thought patterns and beliefs that are holding you back. We have to identify and work through the barriers to change before transformation is possible.