

**CREATING
THE
BEST
VERSION
OF YOU**

*"Read it cover to cover.
You'll be glad you did."
— Neale Donald Walsch*

**Awakenings Through Pain,
Presence and Becoming**

KIM HILES

CREATING THE BEST VERSION OF YOU

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"There are a lot of ways to gather wisdom in life, but one of the best ways I have found is by observing the experience of others; to see what they have to say about the overcoming the obstacles they have faced, which can save me the trouble of having to resolve the same life problems. Kim Hiles has written just such a book, and I can place my response to it in 14 words: This book is filled with insights that can be of real use to everyone.

"Truly. No hype. Short section after short section ends with just what people could benefit from knowing and remembering about ways to powerfully meet particular life challenges. Read it cover to cover. You'll be glad you did."

— Neale Donald Walsch

Author of the *Conversations with God* series

I am deeply grateful to the teachers and mentors who have helped shape my journey: Neale Donald Walsch, Eckard Tolle, Marie Manachueri, and so many others I've listed in other books.

Thank you to my family and community, both past and present, who walk beside me and continue to inspire and support my evolution. I feel so blessed.

Introduction: Breaking Point

For 30 years, I was on a spiritual quest, committed to becoming the best version of myself.

I got sober.

I joined a spiritual community.

I dove into deep healing through many various modalities.

I faced my fears and became a teacher and behavior specialist.

I wrote books about the discoveries I made along the way.

I created online courses to help others and set myself up for success.

And then ... my life blew up.

Several close loved ones passed away.

The school I had taught at for 19 years was closing, and I was retiring.

My son left the nest.

My writing and courses weren't making any money.

And I was pissed.

That summer, after my final year at the school, I was on fire with ideas.

I met with a friend and coworker to plan how to market the hell out of my business. We made timelines and got things moving.

At the same time, I felt a sudden urge to sell our house. Everyone had to go through their stuff. I was on a rampage, driven and relentless.

Behind the scenes, I was also questioning my relationship. I seriously considered ending it after 30 years. I envisioned selling the house and each of us getting our own place. I just wanted MY space with MY things and MY peace. That was that.

After two weeks of racing post-school energy, I crashed.

I despised who I was.

I despised my life.

I felt like a total failure. My negativity, hypochondria, and OCD tendencies had taken over.

I felt powerless, trapped in the very victim mindset I had spent years helping others escape.

My life's work had been about empowerment ... and what a joke I felt like.

The grief consumed me. I cried every day.

A trip to visit family was coming up, and I was going. As the departure approached, my anxiety worsened thus bringing intense digestive issues and panic.

The airline delays didn't help. Neither did the grief.

This trip was going to be hard. My loving sister was no longer with us. My son and husband couldn't come. Everything hurt more.

The anxiety, combined with physical pain and profound grief, led me to the edge of a deep depression.

A familiar place.

One I've battled before.

And it sucked.

But something magical happened on that trip and that's what I want to write about.

I tried continual deep breathing but after a few days of being miserable, I woke up in the middle of the night and said out loud:

"I'm done feeling bad."

How to Use This Book

This book is meant to be a guide. I wrote a passage each day, drawn from what I was living through: **Pain, Presence, and Becoming.**

For you, the invitation is simple: trust your intuition. You can read it straight through, beginning to end, or you can open to the page that calls to you in the moment. Either way, notice what message is waiting for you today.

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PAIN

Invitation 1: New Script

Today, start with a new script. Use the anger if needed to declare your new truth! Speak it loud and proud!

After declaring I was done feeling bad, I started rewriting the new script of my life.

For years, I had been affirmatively praying that I was living my best life and becoming the best version of myself. But I wasn't feeling it and it wasn't happening.

Not really.

Until that day.

I woke up that morning, on my trip visiting family, and my mom gave me an article about grief. During my morning coffee, I read it. It had useful tips, but it was the last line that pierced me:

Live the best version of yourself.

That had been my intent and affirmation all year so, to me, that was synchronicity at work and I knew I was onto something.

That day, I chose differently.

Instead of forcing myself to read a book I'd been struggling to start, I listened to my intuition and reached for something that called to me:

Conversations with God by Neale Donald Walsch.

I had first discovered and read the book thirty years ago and it had a huge impact. I clearly remember being so excited about the book that I wanted to share it with everyone!

So on that day, reading it again, the words hit even deeper. I had preached this stuff for years but I wasn't really living it recently.

That day was different.

I felt joy.

I felt connected.

I felt me, a version I barely recognized, but deeply loved.

I ...

Connected with others.

Listened with my full heart.

Observed the beauty around me.

Stayed present, even when the negative thoughts tugged at me.

Felt joy, not jealousy, for others.

Cried tears of joy with others.

Cried tears of sadness with others.

I realized how little I had known about truly loving myself. And how much I wanted to learn.

I wanted to be the best version of myself. And maybe you do too, which is why you are here.

The truth is, it is a choice that comes one day, or sometimes even one moment, at a time.



Practice: Practice putting your thoughts on hold for a moment and really observe and witness your present moment.

Name 5 things you can see. 4 things you can touch. 3 things you can hear. 2 things you can smell. 1 thing you can taste.

Invitation 2: Stumbles

Stumbles are part of the process so observe them without judgment.

Have you ever felt your emotions fluctuate up and down?

One day you feel amazing, and the next, it all comes crashing down. Yesterday was one of those down days for me. I woke up with that familiar black cloud over my head with loads of physical discomfort and anxiety. I was barely eating because my digestive system was at a standstill and I didn't want the horrible bloating to get worse. I felt cloaked in fear. The profound sadness that my sister was not with us and the overwhelm I felt intensified everything. I felt as if the "high" from the day before never happened. I was hoping the trip would get me out of my funk but, because my sister wasn't there, I felt swallowed up by grief.

If you've ever felt like this, I see you. Let's walk this journey together.

If we are really committed to becoming the best version of ourselves, it makes sense to allow these moments to be what they are, without judgment. The more we fight the feelings, the louder they get. What we resist persists so I chose to allow the day to be what it was. And yes, it sucked.

As I sat down to read, I remembered one of the simplest keys to happiness:

Focus on what you wish to experience.

Even in the middle of turmoil, this change in mindset can ease pain. So each time discomfort showed up (and it did plenty), I gave thanks for what I already have and returned to the present moment through Heart Coherence breathing. It wasn't like a magic switch, trust me. My mind kept pulling me back into the fear over and over but I continued to show up and breathe throughout the day. HeartMath® is a research-based method that helps synchronize the heart and brain into coherence, bringing greater balance into our lives. I've practiced heart coherence for years, though never as consistently as I'd like.

It takes time, I've realized. Our brains have spent a lifetime repeating fear, self-doubt, and worry. Mine certainly has. My inner critic (monkey brain) is always ready with an opinion! It's relentless and never stops! But each time I practice showing up differently, I'm reprogramming my brain so new patterns can begin to stick. That's the plan, anyway.

When you change the story you keep repeating, you create a new way of being in the world.

 **Practice:** This too shall pass. What patterns or habits have you played with for too long? And how would you rather show up to life? Choose one practice that you could start implementing in your life today.

Invitation 3: Light In Darkness

When everything piles up, even in chaos, we can still find a light in the darkness.

Life sometimes throws everything at us at once: pain, money struggles, delays, stress, and the weight of it all can make you feel like standing in the middle of the airport, crying in despair. That happened to me in the airport on my way home from my trip. Have you ever felt like the world was conspiring against you?

I spent a lot of extra money to get home a day early on what was supposed to be a direct flight. I was trying to see my doctor the next day because my digestive system was out of hand. I was in pain.

On the day of the flight, I was grateful to visit with my best friend before heading to the airport. Everything was going according to plan, or so I thought.

When I got to the airport, the luggage attendant yelled at me because I started putting my bag on the conveyor belt before he told me to. I thought he had, and I tried to explain, but he kept shouting.

I was embarrassed, sad, and felt extremely vulnerable. I was feeling sorry for myself and just wanted to crawl into a hole. I have found that when I've been at my most vulnerable and desperate, I've sometimes attracted people who prey on that. Being aware of this can help prevent others from taking advantage.

As I sat waiting for my flight, I experienced delay after delay until finally at 11 p.m. the flight was canceled. Have you ever been in one of those moments and think, "Really? Not one more thing!" I had so many cancellations and mishaps just getting here on this trip and now it was happening again. I felt like I was in a nightmare I couldn't escape. Surreal!

Had I not been in so much pain, I would have taken the hotel voucher and rolled with it but my stomach felt like it was going to explode and the anxiety, coupled with financial stress, caused me to be frozen, and in shock. I stared at the airline attendant, probably with my mouth open, tears streaming down my face

and pleading for help! I even told her I needed to get to the hospital. Yet she looked back at me blankly and said nothing. I feel certain she thought I was nuts.

Thankfully, after speaking with my mom on the phone, she talked me off of the ledge with her emotional and financial support and I dragged myself to the hospital. After being checked over, treated and released, I got about one hour of sleep before going back to the airport to try again.

The kicker? This new flight wasn't a direct flight after all. I paid extra money to basically go home the same day and with the same kind of flight. I feel certain this will be funny one day but you probably agree that when we are in it, things are far from funny. I stayed close to the bathroom through both flights.

Here was the light. I ran into an old colleague from my school who happened to be on both flights. Catching up with him was a pleasant surprise as we shared memories and moments. It felt synchronistic, like a tiny reminder that even in despair, connection shows up.

♥ **Practice:** When life feels relentless, notice the small points of light that appear anyway. They're not accidents. They're signs. Where do you see the light?

Invitation 4: Vulnerability

Living life fully means we get to experience all of our emotions. This is the power of vulnerability.

So many of us learn to protect our hearts, putting up invisible shields because caring too deeply once left a scar. Have you ever pulled back because you were afraid of getting hurt?

I remember being at overnight camp as a kid with my sister. She always tried to help me, even signing up for activities with me so I wouldn't be alone. One time she got to an activity too late, and the woman in charge rudely told her she couldn't join. My sister shrugged it off, but my heart ached. I don't think my sister was bothered by it but I remember feeling so bad for her. I remember a strong ache in my heart that I never forgot.

It hurt.

I've always felt things intensely, both for myself and for others. Empathic. Sensitive. Maybe you've noticed the same in yourself.

When I met my husband and looked into his vulnerable eyes, my heart exploded. I felt so deeply it scared me. Have you ever felt like that? I even had the thought, “You’re going to hurt him.” That fear, along with not feeling deserving of his love – although I wasn’t consciously aware of that at the time – made me try to sabotage our relationship many times.

I’ve realized I’ve been operating from my brain more than my heart, sometimes appearing cold or detached. Do you ever pull back to protect your heart?

With so much loss, I feel like I’ve been stunned into numbness. Detached, almost like I’m watching life instead of living it. We can feel shattered by grief.

But even so, each day we get to make a conscious choice to show up and be present and be the best version of ourselves. Our best will change day by day. We have an opportunity to choose love and risk caring, even when it hurts. Because feeling it all, the joy and sorrow, is what makes us feel alive.

 **Practice:** Do you ever notice yourself guarding your heart?

When life gets heavy, do you pull back or lean in? Take a risk and open your heart to someone or something today. You are stronger than you know.

Invitation 5: Compassion

Compassion is a gift that starts with your heart.

Sometimes life hands us moments that challenge our level of compassion, for ourselves and others. It's tempting to shut down or protect our hearts when things feel unfair.

Yesterday, something happened to my husband that reminded me of this.

He dressed in his first-day-of-work outfit, excited for a much-needed job. I kissed him goodbye, hopeful right along with him. The position sounded simple: custodial work at a school, with enough time for him to keep writing on the side. For the last year, he's been trying to find something that would supplement his retirement income while allowing him to stay creative and write. It's been a struggle to say the least.

An hour later, he called. "Can you bring me a T-shirt, hat, and shorts?"

He had shown up and been handed a shovel. They told him to spend the day removing dirt from the parking lot, alone, in the sun, for the next two weeks.

It was 95 degrees in Texas. He takes medication that warns against prolonged sun exposure. By the end of the day, he was sunburned, sick, and sore all over. None of this had been mentioned in his interview. He had signed up for janitorial work, not groundskeeping. The shock of it still stings.

But in the middle of my own worry, sitting at acupuncture, trying to balance my own system, I realized something. I was actually connected to my heart. I was feeling for him, not shutting down. And that's a big shift, because I used to say to him, "Suck it up, buttercup."

 **Practice:** Do you ever notice yourself closing off when things get tough, or do you allow yourself to stay connected to your heart? Show compassion to yourself or another today. What could you say?

Invitation 6: Mindset

We can change our mindset anytime we want. Sometimes we need to do it over and over again.

Last night, we went to the movies with my son and his partner, and it was something I didn't realize I needed. It pulled me out of my funk somewhat. The words that kept coming to me were: *You can't wait to feel better before you start living. You must live and show up, and then you'll feel better.*

I woke up wondering what kind of day I'd have, even though on some level I knew it's me who gets to decide. So I focused on gratitude, set an intention to be the best version of myself, to be present and live fully.

My digestive issues had passed for the moment. I gave thanks for all the people and places I've lost, thanking them for being part of my life for so long. The feelings of gratitude grew and almost knocked me over.

I played my song, a poem I wrote about finding my voice, and remembering that happiness is an inside gig. I sang it with tears streaming down my cheeks.

Suddenly, I felt excited about the next chapter: the new job, the new home (when the time comes), and this new way of life I'm beginning to settle into.

I still don't quite recognize myself, because I'm listening, loving and being more fully present. It feels a bit odd. But I have to say, it's so much more fun than obsessive worry and control.

Allowing others to be who they are, and offering continual kindness, feels pretty freeing. It's joyful.

My choice: It's going to be a great day.



Practice: Have you ever turned fear into excitement? Try it. Your body doesn't know the difference. What if you shifted your perspective? What might open up for you? Your perspective can shift any situation.

Invitation 7: Love Is

Just Because: the Truth about Love.

Most of us spend years trying to figure out what love really means. It only took me thirty years to really learn **how** to really love someone.

Just because.

Many of us feel that if we just find the “right” person, all will be well. It will be perfect! I know that I chased, I looked and I ran. Real love was somewhat foreign to me.

Over time I realized love isn’t earned or proved, it’s offered. Freely. Just because they are a child of God, as we all are. I stopped trying to make love happen and I chose to be the expression of love.

This doesn’t mean love is always easy or pretty. It means choosing love again and again and to stay open, even when it’s

uncomfortable. It's letting go of the fantasy that someone else will "complete" us and realizing love begins within.

Instead of taking, I now practice asking: What can I give?

Instead of focusing on what they can or can't give me, I ask: How can I love more fully?

How can you love more fully?

It's so much more fun and joyful than continually looking outside of myself for the love I think I need.

I am filled with all the love in the universe. So are you.

♥ **Practice:** How you treat others says everything about how much you love yourself. What does giving love look like for you?

Invitation 8: Sacred Challenges

Challenges in our lives are our teachers and they have a message for us.

Some days really do feel like the universe is lining up one test after another, little challenges meant to see how we'll respond. At that moment, it can feel exhausting and unfair.

I woke up feeling amazing. My stomach felt pretty good. I was waking up with conscious intention. Affirmations and gratitude poured out of me like it was my new reality. I felt alive, free, and excited about the path ahead.

I was outside cutting vines before taking the animals in. A wonderful ritual for me is hanging out with Zelda, my dog, and my two cats. They have their catio, but when I'm outside, they come too.

Then it happened. A sharp sting on my finger. For a moment I worried. Was it a scorpion? Something worse? But as I peered into the vines, I saw the nest.

It hurt, yes, but I kept going until the job was done. Later, inside with my furry friends, I iced it too tightly and nearly cut off circulation. The swelling moved up my arm, and hours later I found myself calmly checking into urgent care online. Miracle in itself: I didn't freak out.

Of course, while using a QR code at the clinic to pay, I managed to also click a spam site accidentally and handed over my credit card to scammers. Right? Where the heck was my head? Dealing with one crisis at a time, I called the bank and canceled my card, got the cortisone shot, and headed home.

That night, I kept asking: what was this really about? Was it really necessary? Seriously, enough! Every time I started to feel like I was coming back to life, something wacky happened! I was over it.

I decided to pull a tarot card and a message came to me.

Born colicky, maybe I imprinted early that the world was painful and unsafe, thus creating situations that affirmed this. The feeling of being unsafe, scared and braced for pain had been visiting me again lately. Familiar, but no longer useful.

And then I had another thought: If I want to become the best version of myself, all of that old garbage will probably come up. It has to be seen, cleared and released.

The tarot card suggested a visualization that reminded me to expand beyond the small self, to shift outward until I merge with the whole universe. Thirty years ago in a healing session, I once felt that deeply. I was meditating and it seemed like I had left my body and was merging with the universe and all that is. I felt one with everything! The love I felt was indescribable, like nothing I had ever felt here on earth, and I didn't want to return. At that moment, I understood my essence. Although I have not been able to have meditations like that again, maybe it's time to remember.

I am reminded that when you feel like you're waiting for the other shoe to drop, tell yourself you need new ones anyway.

♥ **Practice:** Have you ever felt challenged beyond your limits?

What practices help you reconnect with something larger than your small self? Here is one. Try imagining your body starting to sparkle then dissolve into tiny particles of light, expanding and becoming one with the whole universe.

Invitation 9: Inspiration

Inspiration can come from the most unexpected places. Pay attention to any messages you receive.

Through a Tik Tok video of all things, that's where I stumbled onto a video about Carl Jung's shadow work, and it pulled me in. Shadow work has always felt important to me, because whenever I've done it, I've discovered pieces of myself that were asking to be seen, healed, or integrated.

In quiet meditation, the instruction was simple: Start a dialogue with the image of your anxiety, your shadow self. It was time to lift the veil and listen to what anxiety has to say to me. It can be our teacher, instead of an enemy, so it was time to ask it what I needed to know.

That turned into some powerful mirror work. Louise Hay talks about using a mirror for healing and I invite you to check out her book, *You can Heal Your Life*.

I spontaneously began speaking aloud, and all of my fears and anxieties from my whole life came gushing out of me. How exhausted I felt by the fears ruling my life for so long, a constant mumbling, lurching in the background. I was crying pretty deeply at this point as it all came gushing out.

I realized I've never truly felt secure, even from the time I was born. So after speaking it out loud, I picked up the mirror, looked right into my eyes, and the healing began. My greater self began talking to me.

What came to me was that it was never about Will. I had been obsessing as usual, thinking he was part of the cause of my unhappiness. In fact, it was not about anything external going on, rather the lifetime fears and insecurities needed to be addressed.

What came to me was this:

You are secure in my love. You are safe.

I wrapped my arms around myself and felt those words fully.

We started a dialogue and I was told this:

We are not supposed to be perfect. We will hurt people, have regrets and make mistakes. If we can repair it, great but if not, send the Ho'oponopono' prayer to them and make peace.

I spent time in that moment feeling the love I was receiving while saying the comforting words of security.

Have you ever done shadow work? It can be powerful. We all have shadows, or darker parts to ourselves we fight against or deny.

But when we shine a light on them, we realize they just want to be seen and heard. In some ways, they are trying to protect us but eventually we might realize they are no longer serving us, but hindering our growth.

 **Practice:** Look in the mirror and make friends with all of you. What might your shadow self need, to feel safe being seen today? As you see her in the mirror, share your love with her.

Invitation 10: The Unknown

Stepping into the unknown is where transformation begins.

I started my new part-time job yesterday. I wanted to take a break from teaching, collect a pension check, and open a new chapter.

I decided to drive an hour and ten minutes because the job felt right. When I had decided to retire by the end of the school year, Elisha, an old friend and coworker, called me out of the blue and asked if I'd be interested in helping at her dog boarding/rescue business. Thrilled was an understatement.

I committed to the hour-long drive and decided to use that time for inspiring podcasts. After all, this was a time of change. Driving down to Wimberley, Texas felt like a distant memory, like driving through the farm fields in Germany. I noticed the scenery with awe and knew, somehow, I would live there.

On the drive, I listened to Eckhart Tolle's course I was taking on navigating a Dark Night of the Soul. Perfect timing. As I listened, I found myself really practicing presence and not just talking about it, but embodying it. I have often found that it is easier to practice presence while in nature but much harder when our life feels blown up. So this was a new experience for me.

As I walked through the door, and observed the day to day part of the business, I felt immense overwhelm and exhaustion. The reality hit home. But I carried through the teaching of Eckhart Tolle and practiced staying present no matter what task I was doing. Driving home was a beautiful experience as I continued listening to his audio, while noticing the beautiful landscaping around me. Any stray thought that came up, I noticed it but then went right back to observing, noticing, and listening to what he was saying. This allowed me to feel connected to Source again—my essence.

We create so many stories, roles, identities, and jobs about who we are, and when it is all stripped away, we are left with nothing. But, in that nothing, we can experience our true essence if we allow it to unfold. Have you ever gone through change in which nothing is familiar? It can feel like a void.

She gave me a couple of nights off and I can't lie. As I drifted off to sleep, I wondered if I was making a mistake. I enjoy rewarding jobs that help others and I was unsure if this was a right fit. I contemplated getting back into some part-time teaching experience and not making any drastic changes in my life. This would bring a sense of "normalcy" or familiarity back to my life.

In the end, I decided to keep showing up so I could really practice the art of being present, giving love, and choosing to be the best version of myself.

 **Practice:** How does the art of being present show up in your life? Do you practice it in the middle of change, or only when things are calm? Return to the present moment when consumed with worry or uncertainty. What do you see, hear, taste, touch, or smell?

Invitation 11: Present Moment

Sometimes the most mundane tasks can give us meaning, purpose and joy.

Cleaning up poop.

One day, I'll look back on this time with a smile in my heart but I am not there yet.

Even though I've been carrying stomach discomfort again, I've started to enjoy my one-hour-and-ten-minute commute. I use the drive for inspiring podcasts and I practice the art of being present. In those moments, I feel so connected to Source, without a care or worry. I feel sedated although I am clear as can be.

When I arrive, I often begin by cleaning up poop. But as negative thoughts start to enter my conscious mind, I immediately say "present" and return to the task at hand. It's humbling after 19 years of running my own programs. But I find it the most perfect place to practice presence and showing up with love.

On the way home, I listened to Gregg Braden, who spoke about something he learned from *The Prophet* by Kahlil Gibran. It resonated with me, and I decided to use it in my life too:

Work is love made visible.

For much of my life, anxiety has manifested in my body. I would find myself in endless loops, looking directly for someone to tell me I was ok. Fear of pain and discomfort, and my focus on it, would make things much more difficult. Now, I am practicing using the discomfort and pain to practice being present.

I am also practicing Heart Coherence breathing regularly and I find myself more relaxed and centered each day. It feels unlike me.

♥ **Practice:** Try this grounding activity. Go outside, barefoot and stand on the earth. Imagine a beam of light going down into your head, coursing through your body, your feet and straight down into the center of the earth. Imagine roots shooting off in all directions. Take a breath, open your eyes and explore your environment. What do you see?

Invitation 12: Peace

Peace doesn't mean life is free of fear, worry, or discomfort. It means learning how to come back to your center when those moments arrive.

This morning didn't start smoothly. I was behind schedule, couldn't find my face cream, and my inner critic tried to convince me I was losing my mind, probably dementia. But instead of spiraling, I pulled myself back, became present, and let a podcast carry me into the day. I am utilizing my inner coach (higher self) constantly. We all have cheerleaders within us but many times the louder voice of inner critic steals the show.

Later, as I was standing at work, my hand started tingling. Panic immediately set in and my mind jumped straight to, "I'm having a stroke." But once again, I managed to step out of the fear by shifting my focus back to the present. When I'm in the throes of panic, sometimes I have to talk myself down and practice being present over and over again. It can be exhausting.

On the drive home, I turned on Eckhart Tolle. He described what it can feel like to “wake up” spiritually, like tingling in the hand. I laughed out loud, then cried a little. Either the universe has a weird sense of humor or I was meant to hear that message. It’s probably both.

 **Practice:** Where in your life can you listen to your inner coach, even just for a moment? What would they tell you right now?

Invitation 13: Recharging

Excitement can return when you least expect it.

Today on my morning commute, I listened to Marie Manuchehri. I've also been enthusiastic about the Heart Coherence Collaborative. Every day they send videos and meditations focused on heart coherence, and it completely helps me regain calm and cultivate a positive, healthy mindset.

This morning, I watched an interview with Marie, and it did something within me. For the first time in months, I got a glimpse of, dare I say, excitement?

Twenty years ago, in the midst of a terrifying dark night of the soul, I traveled to Oregon to see a shaman. I talk more about that in my prior books.

Shannon taught me to show up to life, no matter what.

After one visit, I asked him why I always felt so good when I left his office. He kept it simple by telling me that it was because we were talking about **me**. He gave me the space to talk freely, allowing hopes and dreams to come up that I didn't realize I had. I was simply filling up my own cup and bringing energy back to myself. I was recharging.

I felt like that today.

Marie offers a course, and I got excited thinking I will do it. But when I saw the price of \$500, my heart sank. Still, I chose to trust the Universe. In response, I was guided to her podcast which is filled with insight and the most perfect way to spend my time on my long commute.

As I listened, I received a gentle answer to my question about working at the dog ranch:

I'm practicing using the right mindset. I'm not looking at it as "work," but as a way to help a friend.

The video also encouraged focusing on the authentic joy found in the work, no matter how small, because joy raises your vibration.

I realized I truly love the dogs there and feel honored to help. I also recognized today that I'd like to offer more healing to the dogs.

That reminded me of an old dream I had with a friend and the original reason I got my Reiki credentials. Lately, I've been wanting to use that practice again.

Just a week ago, my son had a splitting headache. I instinctively offered Reiki, and afterward, he said he felt so much better. But honestly, I think the session helped me even more.

As stated in *Conversations with God*, If you want healing, heal another. Whatever you want, give it to someone else.

Today, excitement started to seep in again. Because the dark cloud of depression still lingers, I'll take it.

I've recently heard that tingling sensations could be a way of spiritual awakening. Well wouldn't you know, today my foot started tingling.

♥ **Practice:** Is there something you want to create or manifest?

Give it to another today.

Invitation 14: Showing Up

Change can be messy but stay the course. Keep showing up as you.

Have you ever noticed how the smallest change can turn everything around and reignite hope?

Yesterday, the heavy cloud over my head began to lift ... just a little. I've been consistent with my daily heart coherence practice and the art of being present. This quiets the monkey brain, allowing it to slip more quietly into the background and not at the forefront of my existence.

Do you ever wonder what's the point? That's kind of what I'm feeling with my current job but since it's directly in front of me, I will stay the course. I'm trying to really listen to my intuition.

The podcast shows I am selecting are right on, allowing me to move back into my happiest state, conversing with others about spirituality. Thirty years ago, while taking a graduate course in

public speaking, a peer wrote feedback that I was a “God communicator.” While I’m sure she meant to say “good communicator.” I took it as a sign I was meant to share about spirituality in some way.

At the same time, my dreams have been stirring something deep, especially around my 30-year relationship. We have more of a partnership than an intimate relationship these days but it’s worked, until the dreams started. For as long as I can remember, I’ve carried a push-pull dynamic, a fearful-avoidant attachment pattern that I’ve chosen to work through with Will, one day at a time. However, the dreams have left me unsettled and stressed. They make me feel pulled between the safety, love and beautiful life we have built together and going off and exploring more of the world and myself. Then I will come across an article that says if your partner has these qualities, don’t let go! Which he does. It’s curious but we are talking through it all.

I don’t need to solve it today. I can simply breathe, stay present, and keep showing up with love. My friend Kay used to say, “All you need is Love.” And I’m learning that maybe that’s enough ... for now.

♥ **Practice:** When conflicting emotions arise, don't rush to fix them. Accept what is. Breathe. Listen. Trust that your soul knows the way forward and the way will become clear.

Invitation 15: Don't Deter

Growth is never a straight path. It's filled with twists, pauses, and even setbacks. Don't deter.

The reality of my part-time job has settled in, and I've continued battling digestive issues that I suspect are part of this process of change. When I'm going through tough times, things have a way of settling into my gut. What about you? Where do painful emotions land for you?

I'm doing my best to stay present, no matter what's going on, but I can feel a stirring begin to rise. What's next? I wonder.

I'm reminded of a conversation Will and I had about future dreams, and I light up just thinking about it. Two writers living a life of creativity, financial prosperity and freedom ... the house on land, at the lake, and cute cafes and bookstores nearby.

What are your wildest dreams? If I asked you to describe your ideal life, what would you say? Where would you be? What

would you be doing? Who would you be with? Or rather, what are they like?

For a jump start, I've taken the Eckhart Tolle course, I'm listening to uplifting podcasts, and I joined the Conversations with God (CWG) group to find support and community. The group unexpectedly popped up on my Facebook feed, and it felt like the right time to join. No coincidences. Are there other things you could do to support your best life?

Sometimes we just need to get back to basics and return to everything we already know. And over these past weeks, I've gathered some really helpful reminders.

I stay present. I imagine what I want, and I let go of the details like the how, when, and where.

Because I have a knack for manifesting drama or lack, I've been practicing an exercise I learned from a podcast. It's about opening your pores and imagining all kinds of goodness, prosperity, joy, and abundance pouring in.

What I keep hearing over and over is:

Follow your joy.

It can be as simple as noticing and appreciating the most simple things such as observing the birds, watching the clouds drift by, or noticing the joy your dog shows just by your presence.

Be present.

Experience joy.

It's definitely a shift in perspective, a change in mindset. The monkey brain, the one that loves drama and distraction, can keep trying to reel us back in, so it takes constant vigilance. Even as a society, we focus so much on criticism, worry, fear, and putting others down. We do it to ourselves. I'm trying to generate the same passion to lift myself up.

♥ **Practice:** Spend a few moments 100% present in something joyful today, lifting yourself up.

Invitation 16: Heart

Your mind is powerful, but your heart is wiser.

Our monkey mind works hard to keep us safe. It wants us to survive and, I might add, it wants to survive. Sometimes it overprotects us, keeping us stuck in fear, worry, or old patterns that don't actually serve us anymore.

So I'm working on listening to my heart. I've found myself searching for other part-time work. In the process of trying to rediscover my joy, I realized something important: I light up when talking about spirituality, crystals, energy, metaphysics. I love these conversations. So I decided to start looking for work in that direction, with the added incentive of getting my work out there more publicly. What lights you up? What makes you feel happy, excited, passionate, or at peace when you are doing it? If you can't think of anything now, try thinking back to an earliest memory of joy. What were you doing?

Yesterday, Will and I watched an incredible video featuring a woman channeling Archangel Raphael. Whether you believe in that sort of thing or not, it was beautiful, uplifting, and full of love. I resonated with everything she shared. I've always been drawn to channeling. I even took a class decades ago with my dear friend Kay through The Awakening Tribe, a group I belonged to for many years. Through her course, I noticed my abilities opening and I was able to bring through messages. My intuitive abilities exploded.

It felt amazing to reconnect with Will and to rediscover the interests that once brought us together. He's always been an old soul. Like all of us, he veers off course sometimes, but when we align, it feels like coming home.

Even though I've decided to look for other work, and feel I should tell Elisha soon, I've felt a growing sense of peace. And when that peace starts to settle in, wouldn't you know, monkey brain tries to sneak back. It wants me to dwell on the past, worry about the future, or obsess over something random, usually my body. This is an old story I'm ready to release.

Do you know what I do when that happens?

I Laugh. I see the con.

I'm just ... tired of the old patterns that keep me from living a joyful life. Have you ever gotten so sick and tired of being sick and tired?

I see you.

I am willing and ready to change. Are you?

The laughter gives it all less weight. It doesn't pull me under the way it used to. Try it.

And so ...

Let's continue on.

 **Practice:** Where can you find the sense of humor in your life? There is a reason why they say, "Laughter is the best medicine."

Invitation 17: Energy

Sometimes, the moment you step into a space, your energy shifts. Trust that.

That's what happened to me one morning. On the drive, I was lifted by a podcast, enjoying the flow of the commute. But as I pulled into the facility, my energy dropped. I knew in my heart this wasn't my forever place. Still, as I was cleaning the kennels, I worked at keeping my sense of humor and staying present.

At the end of my shift, I had a beautiful conversation with Elisha, the owner. She gave me space to share honestly about my feelings, and her integrity touched me. After we hugged, I left with deep gratitude and relief.

On the drive home, something remarkable happened. I started crying because frankly it's been a regular occurrence. But miraculously, instead of going into it as I normally would, I asked myself: "Who is the observer here?"

And just like that, I shifted. I wasn't the tears anymore. I was the observer. No thoughts ... just stillness. It felt unbelievable.

That drive turned into something sacred. I spontaneously began affirming everything I wanted to manifest or experience, giving thanks as if it had already happened. It became a dialogue with my soul:

“Why am I a successful author?”

Because you didn't quit.

“Why am I a successful guide?”

Because you learned to trust your inner knowing, and now you can help others trust theirs.

This continued as I touched on all of my dreams and moved into self love. I felt bathed in forgiveness, love and light from my highest self.

I had a smile on my face throughout that commute home. This felt like the moment I finally woke up from all of those endless and outdated stories.

That night, I even gave attention to my stomach, gently massaging it as if comforting the colicky baby I once was. I whispered, “I'm here now. I see you. I love you.”

♥ **Practice:** As you go about your day, ask: “Who is the observer here?” See what happens.

Invitation 18: Battle

Make peace with yourself even when you feel you are losing a battle. Keeping perspective is key.

Have you ever had one of those days where nothing seems to work, no matter what you try?

Will and I started the day with some good talks, especially centering around my confusion. It was nice to hear him talk so much because he's a generally quiet dude. I also did all the things that usually make me feel good like movement, heart coherence breathing, and even dancing around the house to move the energy.

But the fear crept in anyway. So done with fear! The digestive pain and issues, the worry, the fixation (looking up ailments online) are getting to be too much. I tried comforting myself, talking to my body, walking Zelda ... and in the end, I just gave up and cried.

To give you a little background, obsessive compulsive disorder visited me early on in my life. It was extreme. My parents tried to help and a therapist I spoke to thought a psychiatric hospital stay was warranted. My obsessions were quite scary. The experience was terrifying and thankfully my parents trusted their intuition and did not leave me there. I did get help, just not there. I share that only to explain the difficulties I sometimes have with my thoughts and the swirling confusion they bring. I hope it resonates with someone.

Do you ever just feel defeat? Like you're doing all the things you're supposed to but in the end you just want to throw in the towel? That was me today. I lost the battle. And things felt hopeless.

Even as some deeper part of me whispered, *This shall pass. This is practice for being the best version of yourself*, I still thought: Fuck that.

It's ok to stumble. We will have days like this.

Turn the page.

♥ **Practice:** Give yourself permission to “fail.” It's just a perception after all. We are having a human experience. Live fully today, whatever that brings.

Invitation 19: Response

In times of change, familiar patterns may return. With awareness, you can respond, not react.

In 2002, I went through one of my darkest nights of the soul, one I never want to experience again. When grief and stress pile up, our bodies and minds can fall into old grooves.

What matters most is how we respond. For me, it means choosing to be kind to myself by not judging. It means finding small grounding moments when the heaviness hits.

Today, I was slipping back into a world of darkness, a depression that feels scary, out of control and filled with moments of terror.

So I made a simple choice.

I immediately got up, went outside, and started snapping photos of flowers and the sky.

Slowly, my face softened into a smile. This was **the pivotal moment** I responded in a new way, instead of continuing the spiral down a dark path.

I still had to keep doing breath work for the rest of the day, but I hung in there. I showed up. I stayed present.

Shannon, the shaman who guided me back in 2002, used to say that our only requirement is to show up.

I've done that.

Every day since.

Later, I got a little spark of excitement when I saw a part-time job opening at a library. I eagerly applied. That's the kind of environment I can handle: kids, books and quiet. A little familiarity feels grounding right now.

 **Practice:** What is grounding for you? What brings you joy? When things appear bleak, what joyful activity can bring you right back into the present moment? Try it today.

Invitation 20: Pivotal Moment

Awakening often begins with a moment that refuses to be ignored.

Oh my God!

Have you ever had a moment that jolted you awake and nudged you forward in your life?

That was me today. I got to speak to Neale Donald Walsch, the best-selling author of the *Conversations with God* series. But before I tell you about that, let me be real.

The day started with rage. This wasn't how I thought my next chapter would look. Have you ever had mornings like that?

On my drive, I yelled, bargained, affirmed, until eventually I calmed down enough to listen to a podcast. I was reminded to be vigilant with my mind when fear was leading, whether from finances, my stomach or the job. The message was a powerful

reminder to me: when fear shows up, bring to mind something that brings you joy. Practice swapping fear with joy, again and again.

So I tried it. At work, I noticed small joys: sunlight streaming through the window, sweet dogs playing and the soft scent of essential oils. It definitely helped.

Then during a Zoom call through the CWG Connect program I stumbled onto, I had the chance to speak with Neale himself. When I shared what I was going through, he told me that 60 is the greatest time in life and suggested I might write a book. “I’ve written six,” I said.

In response he suggested I get involved in his mentor program because he thought it could be beneficial.

Are you serious? I was unaware he had a program such as this.

Yes, I thought!

That night, I felt clear for the first time in weeks. I knew what I wanted: to be a writer who helps people through my words. To

do that, I needed to break these old patterns of lack, health drama and unworthiness and live and create the best version of myself.

♥ **Practice:** Is life trying to get your attention? What nudges are you feeling right now, as you take a moment, breathe and listen.

Invitation 21: Joy

Joy is not a luxury. It's a necessity.

Do you ever read a book or hear someone speak and think, “Well sure, easier for you to say”?

Yeah, me too. Eckhart Tolle I am not.

Life is full of ups and downs. We can practice presence through work, through health struggles, and through whatever life tosses our way. But sometimes, it all comes to a head with one clear realization: **We must have joy in our lives.**

For me, that realization came while working a job I'd taken mostly for flexibility and ease (because I knew the owner.) Elisha is amazing, kind, compassionate, flexible and truly lives by *The Four Agreements* by Don Miguel Ruiz. Elisha moves through the world with utter devotion, heart, and love to every animal fortunate enough to cross paths. But deep down, I knew from the start the work wasn't for me.

When I finally stopped to ask myself what kind of part-time work might actually feel good and joyful, the answer surprised me: I missed working with kids. Terribly.

Sometimes we think we're ready for a big change, but our heart craves something familiar, something that brings energy instead of draining it. That's when we feel the light again.

So I took action and started looking. And even with anxiety, depression, and digestive issues still sitting on my shoulders, I kept showing up. I breathed. I practiced heart coherence. I returned, again and again, to the present. And when the monkey brain showed up, because it is relentless, I whispered my new affirmation: **Old pattern, old story. New choice.**

I noticed how much joy I felt when I was outside, camera in hand, taking photos of birds with the sprinkler misting in the background. Nature, kids, teaching, creating, these are the spaces where my soul lights up and brings me back to presence.

♥ **Practice:** Where do you notice your smile showing up naturally? What environments make you feel most alive and light? What are you doing in that environment?

Invitation 22: Inner Coach

Empower the voice that lifts you up.

We all have an inner critic (monkeybrain) and an inner coach. Who do you listen to most?

Yesterday, the inner coach in me spoke up: *You've got this. It will pass. Stay the course.*

That voice has been showing up more often lately, especially when the inner critic (monkey brain) won't quit.

Later, I was offered a new job with little pay. I accepted. Then another opportunity appeared. And another.

Our finances are stretched beyond reason right now. But I've noticed something: in the past, I would have blamed Will. It would have been stressful and heavy with victimhood. I mean I know we are the creators of our lives and have known that for a long time. However, I've fallen into the blame game way too much and especially around this theme.

Now, when a negative thought enters, I catch it. I say: Old pattern, old story. New choice. Then I return to the present. I speak words suggested by Louise Hay such as: **The issues we're facing ... only good will come from them.**

Today, after doing this, I sobbed. I saw Will for who he really is, a beautiful child of God, doing the best he can. And in that moment, I was reminded: loving him was also loving myself. Have you ever noticed that relationships mirror back what you need to heal?

We are all mirrors for each other. I talk much more about that in my other books and courses.

Later, when old memories surfaced, reminders of how “bad” I’ve told myself I am, I thought of my sister. She always reminded me I was okay. She gave me the support I craved. I’ve always looked to others to tell me I am ok and I have done it with my medical concerns as well.

And then I realized: it’s time I give myself that same love. That same support. So I had a good, deep cry.

Later still, I felt guilty about accepting help from my mom so I texted my best friend, Mary. Meanwhile this little quiet voice whispered: *You want permission from others. Can you give yourself permission?*

Second cry of the day. Growth is like that.

Mary called back and she listened, inspired me, and reminded me of my innocence. Mary's words helped me remember ... It's time to truly love me.

When I told her that Will and I are actually getting closer through all this, she asked:

“Do you know what intimacy means?”

Intimacy = In. To. Me. See.

Wow.

Months ago, I thought I might want to leave this marriage. I imagined living alone, in a tiny space, not relying on anyone.

Now, Will and I are beginning to really see each other on a new level, with love, compassion, and partnership.

Growth is a trip.

Later in the day, after an incredible healing meditation guided by Anita Moorjani, I believe I touched the root of my digestive issues, the energy I was still holding onto. What are some tools you use when you want to connect with your inner wisdom?

It feels as if the old me, the old personality, is gone. A new version is slowly stepping into her own. I've been saying to Will for weeks, "I feel weird," but maybe that's because nothing feels familiar anymore and I'm evolving into someone else? Order and control is a way I've coped in life so this has felt a little foreign.

I no longer care about the drama of the news or the noise of social media. I sit outside instead, observing and listening. I feel my greater self merging with me, its presence not separate, but intertwined. It's constantly offering love and guidance.

I cried a lot today, and I feel somewhat numb. That probably contributes to a sedated kind of feeling as I sit and observe nature.

The light is getting brighter.

Shining a light on the “monsters” ... heals.

♥ **Practice:** What do you need to shine a light on and bring love to in your life?

Invitation 23: Hard Things

You can do hard things.

Yesterday, I went to work moaning and groaning, and this tiny whisper came through: “*You can do hard things.*”

I did still have physical pain at work and on the drive home, but my mood, that little black cloud that keeps following me, began to lift a little. Part of it was physical relief and part of it was simply being intentional with my thoughts and using tools like heart coherence breathing.

When I got home, Will started questioning his work decisions again and I really flipped out. He has had a hard year trying to find part-time work that could supplement his income and allow time for his writing. His uncertainty triggered me so we talked things through. But the next morning those words, **You can do hard things**, really landed.

So I jumped out of bed as he was off to work and hugged him, reminding him: “We’ve got this. It will all work out.” For the first time in a while, I truly felt it. Are there times in your life when things appear bleak and a little voice within reminds you that you’ve got this?

That moment inspired me. Instead of feeling victimized, we can always focus on solutions and invite prosperity in new and joyful ways. I practiced a visualization and I encourage you to try it: a sandy beach stretching forever, infinite grains of sand, endless energy. No limits. See yourself one with the particles in the sand and recognize the endless abundance flowing through you, weightless and one with all that is.

I practice this visualization, or others similar, because Will and I are really trying to live authentic lives, doing what we love and what we feel called to do. I will be honest. It has not been easy, especially financially.

He has always supported my choices in work (or not working) and I can’t imagine someone always threatening to leave me if I were struggling in that way. I am not trying to beat up on myself but it’s important I support him too during times of struggle. I

am also not denying the situation is tiring but I can support him and myself by setting boundaries and **being impeccable with my word**. That's one of *The Four Agreements* by Don Miguel Ruiz, and I try to live by them as best I can.

Speaking of one of the Agreements: **Always do your best**. I went to my school's farewell gathering, briefly, so I could say goodbye to a few people ... or allow them to say goodbye to me. Originally, I was going to skip it, but that agreement propelled me into action. Doing your best means making choices you won't regret later.

Will, my son, and his partner supported me by going to the school with me. They took us out to dinner afterward, and it was the best time I've had in a while.

Because I really want to break old patterns that no longer serve me, I decided to join the mentorship program with Neale Donald Walsch. I didn't want to regret passing up an opportunity of a lifetime.

♥ **Practice:** Just for today, or this moment, how can you do your best? Your best will change every day. What is your best today so you have no regrets later?

Invitation 24: Mistakes

Compassion for self is always an option, especially when we make a mistake.

Do you ever find yourself reacting in a way you regret?

I started the day inspired, light, and even joyful at work. My body felt good, my mind was clear, and I thought: this is what my best version feels like. The only thing that changed was I.

But later, when Will came home, discouraged about his job, again I lost it. This was worse than last time. I yelled. I blamed. I had the best day but fear and uncertainty took over causing me to react in a way I regret. I verbally vomited all over Will and he did not react. Our original plan was to sell the house in the spring, use our equity to live simply so we could both write but tonight I suggested we take a cash offer, split the money and go our separate ways.

Can you relate? One minute you are on top of the world and one encounter destroys it all.

The remorse came instantly. We talked, we shared, and I apologized profusely. Inside, I kept replaying how different the evening could have been if I had simply said: “I’m sorry you’re having a tough time. I know you’ll figure it out.” He and I agree that it’s been the weirdest experience with these jobs that promise one thing and then turn into something completely different. I think we might laugh about it someday, but we’re definitely not there yet.

I’ve struggled with prosperity consciousness my whole life even prior to meeting Will. It’s not about him! He has carried us financially plenty of times. This is something I’m trying to manifest and create in my life so I’m being given lots of opportunities to practice that truth. But today fear won.

Growth can be messy. The path can twist and turn, causing us to stumble.

So tonight, I’m choosing to forgive myself. I’m reminding myself: I am human. We all are. And we get do-overs.

♥ **Practice:** Is there something you are ready to accept or forgive yourself for? Can you give yourself the grace you'd so quickly offer someone else? Can you give grace to another as well? Try it.

Invitation 25: Perspective

Perspective has the power to transform everything.

Are you happy with your work?

Does it bring you joy?

And if it doesn't, can you alter your perspective and find the joyful moments in it?

I stayed at my prior school for 19 years because when things started to sour, I focused on the positive or found a new joy within the organization. Altering my perspective was always the game changer. It's time to practice again.

It's been a couple of days of prepping for my new part-time job. I was super disappointed with the pay, but I took it anyway, as a start. I've been doing everything I can to stay positive, even trying to transform my "gut-wrenching" fear into excitement. I am pretty sure that is a big contributor to the endless stomach ailments I have had these past months.

Yesterday, I had more success with that pivot. I met with HR, joined their gym, and actually felt good ... until I drove by the school where I'll be placed. Instantly, I found myself wishing for my old life back. If my school had stayed open, I know I'd be there. The up-and-down rollercoaster is exhausting, and honestly, I just want to get off the ride sometimes.

Inside, I keep hearing: *give it time*.

And maybe that's the answer. I had another offer, so if this one doesn't fit, I can detour. Still, this isn't the retirement life I pictured. I imagined a tiny home, part-time work that felt fun and light, plenty of time for writing, selling my courses, and living simply.

I know I sound like a victim. But today I've decided I'm not judging myself for it.

 **Practice:** No matter what is going on in your life, find one positive or joyful moment in the experience.

Invitation 26: Experiences

Every seeming misstep can point you closer to alignment.

This morning after meditation, I felt clearer. I set an intention: I want part-time, flexible work that pays well and includes coaching elements. I want to step into confidence and worth.

Do you know what you want? What does your heart say?

Yesterday, I sat through eight hours of onboarding training, for the pay of \$8 an hour. We were told that the “training pay” was low because we were “just sitting there.” My first thought at the time was “Are you kidding? I value my time!” It would be different if it were optional, but all of the training sessions are mandatory.

That moment was humbling. I’ve taught and had full autonomy to run my programs for over twenty years. I thought I wanted something easy to supplement my income, but I also don’t want to settle for less than alignment. Not anymore.

Sometimes we don't know who we are until we first experience who we are not.

We create various experiences so we can gain more clarity about who we are and what we want. So in essence they are not really missteps but opportunities for insight.

I am feeling overwhelmed with this new job and the mentor program. I feel much resistance to it all but I'm trying hard to just trust what's in front of me and show up.

The best part? Will and I are supporting each other through it all. In the past, I might have turned away from the mirror he holds up. Now we're talking, bonding, and breaking patterns. It's not always comfortable, but it's real.

 **Practice:** What in your life shows you what you don't want? We are sometimes given experiences and opportunities to help us figure out what we do want.

Invitation 27: Your Muse

Your muse may already be sitting across from you.

Do you have a muse, or someone who sparks ideas in you?

For me, it's often my husband. Every Saturday we have a little "date" at Starbucks, and we usually end up talking about ideas, books and projects we are working on.

Recently, an old friend I know reached out asking for financial help. My first thought was to say no because we have our own financial struggles at the moment. But since I've been practicing the idea of unlimited supply in the Universe, I gave what she asked for. My husband even said, "Take half from my account." That moment made me pause. How often do we let fear or scarcity hold us back from generosity?

And then he said something that shifted me completely: "Why don't you start your own business offering P.E. and SEL for homeschooling children?"

That idea lit me up. It reminded me that sometimes inspiration comes through others, but real growth happens when we step out of our comfort zone and say yes.

I've realized the jobs I've taken lately weren't destinations. They were stepping stones, each one pushing me closer to the work I really want to do, the work that feels aligned with who I am.

♥ **Practice:** Who or what sparks ideas in your life? Share an idea with someone you trust today.

Invitation 28: Messages

As you step into creating your best version of you, listen to your inner voice for the messages you will receive.

Sometimes, when we slow down and really listen, a quiet voice speaks. Have you noticed that? You will know it's your higher self if you feel love and peace.

Even though I am experiencing digestive discomfort and rib pain from an injury, last night I simply breathed love into my heart. In that stillness, a little voice whispered:

“Everything is going to be fine ... everything is fine.”

At that moment, peace settled over me. No butterflies in my stomach. No nervous chatter. Just calm.

It reminded me how often we let our thoughts run the show. I've done it for years, letting old worries and stories take control. But the truth is, we don't have to be slaves to our thoughts. We can

choose a different focus. But we have to actually take that first step. The step is easy; it's the resistance that keeps us frozen.

What if the discomfort, the uncertainty, or the struggle you're facing is simply the unfolding of a beautiful new chapter? What if you allowed yourself to believe:

Everything is fine.

That's my new mantra and maybe it could be yours too.

 **Practice:** Do you have a mantra or affirmation you want to try today? Try it as often as you can today.

Invitation 29: Opportunities

When faced with difficulties, ask, “How is this serving me?”

I recently listened to a talk about Edgar Cayce’s view of the dark night of the soul. His perspective struck me: instead of sinking into “why me?” victimhood, ask, “What is this teaching me?” Every darkness, he said, is preparing us for a specific mission of service.

That made me reflect on my own experiences. Years ago, I went through another dark time when I needed surgery for a large kidney stone stuck in my ureter. I had a complication that lingered. It wasn’t easy, but during that time I connected with someone who gave me incredible insight about my life path. It nudged me toward coaching, and I took the course. Although I ended up not feeling quite ready to jump into that as a career, the seed was planted.

Now, as I turn a flashlight on my stomach ailments, I can see how digestion problems have connected me to others in my life. I

wonder if they are also wakeup calls for change. I would bet I sometimes need a little push. Our body gives us clues.

Just today, I reached out to an organization about work. While they didn't have openings, they invited me to a sound bath and I felt such a spark of joy at the thought of being around people like that.

♥ **Practice:** If you are having some difficulty in your life or body, ask “How is this serving me?” What benefit are you getting, or need fulfilled, with this difficulty? What needs to be seen or healed? Try a body scan, putting your focus on each body part. Feel what comes up until it's complete and then move on to the next body part. Once released, don't forget to fill yourself up with feelings and statements of wholeness.

Invitation 30: Trust

You can pause, step off the ride anytime.

There are moments when you just want to get off the merry-go-round and say, “Okay, I’m done. I really am done.”

Pain, whether it's physical, mental, or emotional, pushes us into these moments. For me, it's been the mix of work stress, financial pressure, and loss. I've also had countless doctor appointments and I'm ready to be done with that too.

However, I feel that I am on the cusp of something new and exciting: my first one-on-one with Neale Donald Walsch! Thirty years of living and practicing this philosophy, and I finally get to speak with him one-on-one!

I am full of questions about my life path: Do I keep working on trusting the flow of the Universe? Do I keep practicing love, compassion, and seeing the mirror? Or do I take quick action, sell

the house, downsize, make a dramatic move so I can feel a sense of order and control?

That tug-of-war feels familiar. My “thinking problem” likes to jump in with fear, with urgency, and with stories about not being enough. Some mornings I wake up with stress before I even open my eyes. Will is still struggling with his work situations and it’s exhausting.

We all have days like this. The key is not pretending they don’t exist, but meeting them with honesty and a little grace. Keeping it real.

We don’t have to stay on the ride. We can choose to pause, breathe, and ask which voice we want to follow.

For me, today, that means focusing on the excitement and curiosity, not just the fear. It means listening for the guidance that whispers beneath the chaos: *trust the process of your life.*

♥ **Practice:** When fear takes over, do you rush into old patterns or allow yourself to pause and listen? Try taking a breath, a pause and listen to the still, small voice. What does it say?

Invitation 31: Encounters

One encounter or moment can change everything.

Oh my God! Imagine sitting face-to-face with someone whose work inspired your spiritual journey. That's what happened to me today when I spoke live with Neale Donald Walsch on Zoom, best-selling author of *Conversations with God*.

Thirty years ago, his book moved me deeply and helped shape the path I've been walking ever since. And here I was, all these years later, having a personal conversation with him.

It reminded me that connection is everything. Sometimes it only takes one encounter to spark something powerful.

Think about it. Have you ever been down in the dumps, and then someone strolls by and gives you the simplest but most genuine compliment? What happens? Your mood lifts, even if just a little. That's the power of one moment, one act of kindness, one conversation that says:

I believe in you.

Neale gave me tips about my writing, my path, and how to shift my perspective. One thing he emphasized was letting go of the outcome. I haven't practiced that much lately, but it's true: we can set an intention, and then it's just as important to release the expectations. We can't see the big picture so allow the universe to fill in the details. The sky is the limit.

I've been talking about these ideas for decades, but it's not enough to talk about them. The real work is practicing them, especially when life feels hard.

That's what I'm doing, what about you?

 **Practice:** Take a moment and shift everything that is going wrong to noticing and observing all that is going right in your life. Spend ten minutes noticing and appreciating how amazing you are. Then do the same for someone else.

Invitation 32: Body Healing

Our body has an amazing ability to heal itself.

My health has been one of those obsessions for me.

Today I woke up with grit and declared out loud: “I am done thinking about this!” Whatever will be will be but I am moving on. When I get to this point and channel my anger into what I want, I’ve generally had success and changed my situation.

Yesterday, when I started worrying about all the medical tests I might need, Will gently reminded me: **we all have a remarkable ability to heal ourselves.** His words stopped me in my tracks. He was right of course. I’ve taught this for years! So why keep running to doctors just to prove I’m okay? I realized again that I needed to focus on the solution, not the problem.

Anita Moorjani, author of *Dying to be Me* wrote a wonderful book on how she died from cancer and came back from the other side. She shares so much on how we can heal our body when we

really listen to the message it has for us. Check it out for further study.

Of course, doctors have their place and are often essential. But my intuition tells me this is stress and it will pass. I've mastered this before, and I know I can again.

Here's a practice I do: I send love and light directly to the part of my body that feels unwell. I ask what it needs. Then I respond with care, affirming my wholeness.

My mantra:

My body is healthy. My body is whole. I love and approve of myself.

♥ **Practice:** What messages do you give your body? How could you love your body today? What could you say to your beautiful body? What could you do for it? How would you nurture it?

Invitation 33: Ask Questions

Affirmations don't always work when a small part of us resists believing them. Questions, however, open a doorway.

I once heard that one of the simplest ways to shift your perspective is by asking new questions:

- Why am I so happy?
- Why am I a successful writer who inspires others to reach their highest potential?
- What if I lived without anxiety but was free, spontaneous, and full of joy?

I tried it again today and felt a change. Feel free to replace “why” with “what if?”

Too often we get stuck in a low-vibration “victim dance,” looping thoughts that keep us small when all we really want is to live the best version of ourselves.

The other day, Neale Donald Walsch told me directly: “You need to shift the way you see yourself.” He was right. Even though I know I have so much to give, and that I’m a kind and compassionate person, I’ve often seen myself less than.

Are you hard on yourself too?

Thirty plus years ago, when I discovered The Center for Spiritual Living (then called Religious Science), everything changed. I took courses, made lifelong friends, and realized for the first time that **I could do anything**. That was a magical time in my life in which I received signs everywhere about who I was meant to be. It was also when I met my husband.

Somewhere along the way, I lost some of that magic. I still live by those principles, but I’m ready to feel lit up again. Try it yourself. Think of something you want to create in your life and start asking questions.



Practice: Try using this starter sentence and fill in the blanks with a positive outcome:

What if I ... ?

Why am I ... ?

How does that feel in your body? Do you sense a lightness?

Let's keep asking together. One day, one question at a time.

Invitation 34: Synchronicities

Pay attention to synchronicities and simple messages that appear in your life. They can come in various ways.

Today on my walk with my dog, Zelda, a tiny feather blew toward me. I've been seeing them often, and to me it's always a sign that I'm on path. Decades ago, I went to see a shaman and during that healing session an inner voice gave me a message: *Follow the feathers*. To this day, I've used that as a guide.

Lately, I've been journaling to God because my new part-time job hasn't officially started yet, and honestly I'm scared. Scared to go, and scared not to. I just want the fear to go away. Here's part of the conversation:

Me:

“Dear God, I'm trying. I'm doing everything I'm supposed to, and yet I still feel this heavy cloud overhead. It's painful, and I'm so scared. What are you trying to teach me?”

God:

You are a child of God, and you have every right to be here. Do not fret about anything. Fill yourself with inner light and joy. You will feel the effects as you do. This will pass, and your experiences will one day help others. You are on path. Don't stray. Stay present. Keep going outside in nature. Keep quiet and listen.

You and Will are going to be more than fine. You've come together to learn, to break patterns, and to grow, individually and collectively. Many good times are ahead. Revel in this moment of quiet contemplation. You are on path.

Me:

“It’s just that the fear feels so scary and heavy. I’ve always run from these feelings. They feel like they consume me, and I just want it to stop. I want to feel the love of the universe again.”

God:

Then feel the love of the universe. Stop running. Be still with God. Feel it. Know it. When you do, you will be free from all outer conditions. You are one with God. Revel in it now.

♥ **Practice:** Write a letter to God (Higher Self, Life, Inner Knowing, Universe, etc.) and share whatever you want. Then

take a deep breath and allow yourself to write without actively thinking. What came up?

Invitation 35: Higher Self

A question I was asked that may help you: “How can you show up as your highest self today?”

I love that question. Since I started practicing it, I see myself in the best way. I listen more. I respond instead of react. I notice my surroundings more deeply. I’m present in my environment. And when unwanted thoughts come in, I don’t fight them; I simply say, “That’s okay. My body is healing. All is well.” Then I return to the moment.

Back in early July, I crashed hard. Looking back, I believe it happened because I needed a wake-up call. My vibration had been low for a while. If you read the introduction of this book, you know it was building for some time. Every turmoil had been pressing in until I couldn’t ignore it. I tried to use the tools I knew, but something bigger needed to change.

I needed to change in a big way.

The message I keep hearing now is simple: *follow your joy*.

Last night, I turned my focus back to intuitive coaching. As I sat at my computer and prepared my webpage, I suddenly felt alive again. Energized. Marie Manuchehri teaches that this is a sign, to pay attention when joy rises up. Joy raises our vibration. And to be honest, I haven't felt much of that this year.

As much as I've missed my school and the tribe I loved, I realized that in my last year there, joy had faded. That's how I knew I was done. Over 19 years, I always found ways to keep it alive—from shifting my perspective to changing things up completely. This allowed me to stay engaged, and I loved it until I didn't. And that was my sign.

I'm grateful to be walking this path with you. Let's keep paying attention to the sparks of joy. Let's follow them where we can.

Last night, the sky lit up in brilliant orange and pink. And as I always do, I captured it because joy is worth remembering.

♥ **Practice:** Is there something in your life that no longer brings you joy? Is there something you could shift, even slightly, that

would bring more joy back in? Is there a conversation you need to have so you can live more authentically and joyfully?

Invitation 36: Familiar

It's ok to choose the familiar especially if it is filled with joy.

When my school closed, I thought I was done. I told myself I'd retired from working with children. But the truth is, I missed it and realized how much kids brought me energy and joy. I decided against creating my own SEL business for now but chose a part-time job working with students that allows me to show up with them in the ways I love. I was really choosing joy, choosing what I already knew would light me up.

The surprising part? Even with physical pain in my ribs, from a recent injury, showing up my first day with the children lifted me. Yesterday I caught myself thinking, "I don't want to do anything until I feel better." But I remembered that sometimes we don't get better until we are out there, living again.

Being around students reminded me how much meaning and energy this work has always given me. Yes, it's familiar, but it's also joyful. And choosing joy is never the wrong choice.

Is there something in your life that is familiar in all of the best ways?

♥ **Practice:** Where in your life could you stop waiting to “feel better” first, and instead step into something you love and let the joy do the healing?

Invitation 37: Love/Fear

What would love do now?

This is a question I have often asked many times in my life. Yesterday, while meeting with my CWG mentor group, I realized I needed to start asking this in relation to my monkey brain. I've been wanting to break those old patterns of worry, obsession, and fear.

So since yesterday, whenever a thought comes in, I ask myself: "Is this fear or love?"

If it's fear, I gently say: "Not now. I choose love." And then I bring myself back to the present.

They also recommended a book: *The Grief Recovery Handbook* by John W. James and Russell Friedman. It made sense the moment I heard it. Grief is exactly what I've been moving through. I've been trying to push myself out of these uncomfortable feelings, just so I could "feel like myself again." But the truth is, that version of me is gone and it's important sometimes to accept what is.

I've changed. I'm growing and so are you. And for the new version of us to step forward, some old patterns or stories need to be released. Instead of escaping the uncomfortable emotions of grief, I voiced out loud my acceptance of my grief and it's ok to feel the emotions. Voicing out loud my acceptance gave me a surprising measure of peace and self love.

What can you voice out loud with acceptance? What is here and now? Give yourself the gift of acceptance.

This morning, I spoke to my mom, and she's facing some health challenges. Instead of falling back into worry and stress, I chose love. I sent her remote healing instead.

♥ **Practice:** What thought, worry, or situation in your life could shift if you paused and asked: **What would love do now?** Then take action.

Invitation 38: Choice

Choosing love over fear is the most powerful decision you can make.

When I finally practiced it, I noticed something powerful: I was actually successful. Each time a fearful thought rose up, I moved to love.

The truth is my brain has been very unsuccessful at solving most of my problems. Maybe you can relate. Sure, when the brain works together with the heart or soul, solutions come. But if the brain alone is running the show, forget it.

That night, as I was falling asleep, again I voiced out loud that I'm done thinking about it all! I decided I'm going to trust the greater Me, my higher self, to guide me. My only job is to show up to life and trust the process. I'm done with overthinking. At least, that's my intent.

It made me laugh. I've heard advice like this my whole life, but something is clicking a little more now than ever. Maybe it's age. Maybe it's hitting bottom so hard that it doesn't matter anymore. Maybe it's finally getting to the point where I just don't care what the monkey brain says. I don't know.

What I do know is this: I felt peace when I decided I wasn't going to worry anymore. What's the point? Seriously, when has worry ever been helpful? My thought was, "If something drastic happens, I'll just take myself to the hospital." Simple. Direct. Done.

I laughed.

In that moment, I felt free from the incessant noise of worry. Free from the waste of time in my brain.

♥ **Practice:** Do you ever catch yourself in that loop of overthinking? What might shift if you told yourself: **I'm done thinking about ____ . I choose trust in the greater ME. They have my back!** Try it today, as many times as you need.

Invitation 39: Depression

Start paying attention and becoming aware of your thoughts.

Depression can creep in slowly, almost like a shadow.

When I look back on the times I've struggled with depression, I can always trace it back to what thoughts I'd been feeding my mind: worry, fear, self-doubt. The good news? Each time I changed my thoughts, I noticed something powerful. My life changed too.

I have been practicing this for a very long time. However, I really had to put it to practice when I went through a serious depression in 2002. I discovered *Feeling Good* by David D. Burns and it was eye opening. Thoughts and desired feeling states could create the reality you intentionally choose. Even if you don't feel it yet, act as if you do. Or better yet, rehearse it until it becomes real.

These days, I'm practicing this again, even deeper. When the soul and the mind work together, life flows differently. That's where heart coherence breathing comes in for me. Research shows that the heart is like a second brain, sending powerful messages to the mind. The practice is all about bringing desired feeling states into the heart on a regular basis.

Today, inspired by homework from the CWG mentor course, I decided I wanted to experience being joyful, loving, and secure. Not just affirm it, but embody it. I breathed those states into my heart.

Then I went outside, smiling. I noticed an elderly man riding his ancient bike down the road, and it made me laugh out loud. That moment was pure joy.

This is work in progress, but I'm committed to carrying this state of being into my first day, at my new site, where I will be working daily with the children.

 **Practice:** What three states of BEing do you want to experience? No matter what's happening in your life right now, pause and choose three states of BEing you'd like to carry with you, or embody, just for today.

Invitation 40: Soul

What is it your soul wants to experience more of?

We came here for a reason. I believe it is to experience whatever it is our soul came here to do.

I've been paying close attention to one constant theme: **Follow your joy.**

At the part-time job, I do find joy in the students, my co-worker and the school. That's where I try, though often unsuccessfully, to keep my energy focused. I struggle with some other parts of the job.

My work at my prior school was different. That was my tribe. People came and went, but the energy, the frequency, was something I aligned with deeply. Losing it has been more devastating than I ever imagined. I had no idea how much my identity was tied to that community. Losing it felt like I lost a limb. The transition has been tough. Maybe you are going through some changes too and are having a hard time letting go.

Today I was guided to an interview that lit me up. I felt respected and valued. I spoke about topics that reminded me of the passion I still carry. We feel like family not because someone tells us we should, but of an energy exchange that aligns.

 **Practice:**

Where is **your** joy? Do you have a tribe or community you feel connected to?

What lights you up? What energizes you when you talk about it?

Follow it or take one small step toward it, today

Invitation 41: Reflect

Reflections are part of the process.

Sometimes we are trying to focus on joy, love, security, wholeness ... and then suddenly, it hits. We stop, catch our breath, and the emotions come.

That's been my reality lately. I showed up for a meeting at my job and instead of feeling purposeful, I felt heavy. The new job turned out to involve more training and meetings than I expected, and for the pay I am receiving, it left me wondering how far I have fallen. If I were just running a program, I'd be fine. But all of this extra work? It's causing me to reconsider.

So I keep asking the Universe: what's the meaning here? The inner nudge keeps saying: You deserve more. Your time is valuable. You thrive when you're sharing knowledge with others. Maybe I haven't found the right fit yet.

My original plan was simple: to write, coach, and teach, through my courses. Maybe it's time to stop putting that dream on hold and figure out how to make it work. In the meantime, I'm choosing to keep showing up to **what is**.

♥ **Practice:** Pause, breathe and reflect. When the doubts come, breathe love into your heart and allow for a moment of silence. Listen and feel for any insight.

Invitation 42: Connect

Find a practice that connects you to your soul, your highest self.

One way I connect is through the tarot. Last night I drew a card, and it reminded me of something I'd forgotten: I am empowered. I can trust myself and the Universe. I don't have to say yes when I mean no. I can be impeccable with my words.

That hit home because I never felt right about accepting this pay, the very lowest pay in the range listed, even though I asked for more. With my extensive experience, training and certifications it felt like an affront. So I realized I'd be giving notice soon. I feel a calling to rise into my next chapter.

Today, during another training session, I practiced continuous heart coherence breathing. I focused on my belly, my biggest trigger point for worry and pain. Alongside advocating for myself with doctors, I've made healing meditations part of my practice. They're helping.

And here's what excites me: I feel genuine hope about another job opportunity. Something in me knows it could guide me further on my path.

Here's something you can try: Close your eyes and imagine a path stretching out in front of you.

- What does it look like?
- What feelings rise up as you walk it?
- What do you see yourself doing?
- Where is your joy?

Sometimes the simplest practice can reconnect us with our heart and soul.

 **Practice:** If you are unsure of your path, close your eyes and imagine different paths in front of you. As you start walking, observe which way your body naturally goes. When I don't have an answer, my choice is to make no changes and just keep showing up.

PRESENCE

Invitation 43: Power

We've got the power! State your intention and sing it!

Yesterday I declared I was done being a victim. Again. I reclaimed my power! We get to do that anytime we want and as often as we need. As I am sure you've noticed, I need to do it quite regularly.

Aside from painful ribs from a recent injury, I had a wonderful time with the students. I've grown quite fond of them. Honestly, I think I could do this if it weren't for all the other "stuff." One thing I keep practicing and declaring when negativity pops up is this mantra: **My body is healthy, my body is whole, I love and approve of myself.**

At this time I am making a choice to keep showing up. I'm getting my rib injury checked this morning and, believe it or not, my stomach actually feels somewhat normal again. I can't stress enough the power of intention. Lately I've really had to practice, deeply, all that I've taught others for so long.

Shall I declare the cloud has lifted? Let's not jinx it.

My relationship has never felt better. For the first time in a while, we are fully supporting each other through a painful and difficult time. In the past, I would try to be supportive, but then lash out at Will about money and around and around it went. This time, as I went through my own struggles, he simply supported me, as he always has with regard to my work. Even though it was scary, even though I had no idea how the bills would get paid, I practiced letting go and trusting the process of life, wherever it led. This is a release of victimhood and a celebration of one's power.

I offered him support, too, as he faced a very difficult decision, even though it directly affected me.

The only thing that matters is showing up with love.

Will now has a job he feels good about, one that will allow him to keep writing his book. I'm still figuring it out, but my confidence is back. I know who I am and what I love to bring to the world. I thrive teaching students and parents how to move through life socially and emotionally. I love helping adults live authentically. I

love working with energy, tuning in to messages from the Universe, and bringing insight and awareness to others.

I also enjoy nature, going on photo walks, capturing the beauty I see. I love my family, my son and his partner, my mom and her weekly calls, and those close to me who have always supported and accepted me.

I could not always say all of this. In the past, if somebody asked me what I enjoyed, I would say I didn't know. What do you enjoy? Keep it simple if you need to.

Even if you're not feeling it, try this: Write down everything you're grateful for. It can be as simple as running water, food, and a place to sleep. Keep going and add as much as you can. Gratitude grows.

Sometimes changes happen instantly. Other times, especially after a big loss, change, or trauma, we need to give ourselves grace, to let emotions come and go, even when they're uncomfortable. Nothing lasts forever. We can always count on change.

♥ **Practice:** Where in your life can you reclaim back your own power? Where do you want to focus your energy on?

Invitation 44: Support

You don't have to walk this path alone.

It's important to get help from trusted people when you need it. I needed it, and through the CWG mentor program, I've gotten that support.

If you're grieving, I encourage you to read *The Grief Recovery Handbook* by John W. James and Russell Friedman. As I'm learning, there may never be closure, but there can be completion. Like a good laugh, we grieve until we are complete.

I also sought support from grief counselor JR Westen at Soulutions Counseling (jrwesten.com). What I learned from our time is that my body was clearly telling me that this work was not bringing me the joy, peace or love I thought it would. I noticed I felt pain when I was at work and relief when I was home.

I'm also paying attention to my focus. Every time we start a sentence with "I love ____" and then follow it with the word **but**,

that's a clue we're limiting the best version of ourselves. An example might be that I love to help others live an authentic life but I need a paycheck. The Universe gives us back our version of "truth," so it's important to stay mindful of the stories we tell ourselves. For me, that means dropping the word **but** and refusing to settle for anything that takes away my joy.

What a freedom to know that I gave my notice and I have only two more weeks. It opens up the field of possibility because now the focus is joy, not fear or lack.

♥ **Practice:** Where do you receive support from? Do they tell you the truth or what they think you want to hear? Do they accept you and your choices? If you released the word **but**, what would be your truth?

Invitation 45: Letters

Writing a letter to God (Higher Self, Source, Spiritual Guides, etc.) is one way we can connect with our Soul.

I wrote a letter to my highest self the other day and I had a nice exchange. Instead of writing the whole back and forth exchange, I thought I would share the gist of what I received. Feel free to try this practice for yourself too.

The message was simple but powerful: *Trust my intuition and continue reclaiming my power. Feeling like a victim has been a comfortable pattern for me, but it no longer serves me. It's time to release that story about myself.*

I was reminded that I'm going through big change, an awakening, and that my only job is to trust it and let go.

I was reminded that I'm meant to help others, to follow my joy, and to surround myself with people who are aligned with me. When I do that, everything else will come together. I'm

awakening and I was encouraged to continue to hug myself as though I'm being embraced by another. And to repeat *I am here for you always*.

It's important to connect with our highest self. In addition to my heart coherence breathing, I've been meditating to give space for new insights to come through. I can't always see the big picture but my greater self can.

♥ **Practice:** What do you do when you want to connect with your highest self? Have you tried writing a letter? Is there another practice you feel called to try today?

Invitation 46: Aha

Aha moments can happen anytime! Pay attention.

After I decided to quit my job, I asked myself: What brings me joy? Immediately, worry tried to creep in: What if I have no joy left? What if I'll never find work that truly lights me up again?

So I wrote a list:

- Taking photos of nature
- Helping people
- Working on my course
- Writing
- Making videos

Write down your list.

Later in the day, the magic happened. I looked outside and saw a beautiful sunset. Barefoot, I stepped onto the earth with Zelda by my side, camera in hand. I snapped photos, shot a short video,

and did a grounding exercise. My whole face lit up and I was smiling ear to ear.

Earlier that day, my brain had tried to drag me onto the “worry train,” but at that moment I stopped and asked, “Is it true?” The answer was clear: No. **The truth is, I embody joy, love, prosperity, and wholeness. That’s the truth of who I am.**

And yes, you guessed it, Zelda brings me joy too.

I’m starting to feel the magic of following joy, and my body feels better too. I even made a big decision: no more tests or specialists for now. Why? Because I trust my wholeness.

It’s not just about saying the words. It’s about **BEing** who you want to be. Love. Joy. Security. Peace. Wholeness. Creativity. Expansion. Prosperity. Compassion. When you decide who you wish to **BE**, everything else begins to align. You rise. You embody. You **become**.

♥ **Practice:** What lights up your face with joy without even trying? If you are struggling with this, take some time and care for another. It could be a plant, a person, a creature or a thing. Take time and care for it today. Feel your appreciation for it.

Invitation 47: Happiness

Happiness returns when we decide it's time.

That's what happened to me. Will looked at me recently and said, "Don't take this the wrong way, but I can't remember the last time you smiled like that."

Lately, I've been walking around with this perma-smile on my face, a joy I haven't felt in years. I feel like myself again but an even greater version. A version of me who is being loving, joyful, prosperous, and whole.

It started with a simple declaration: I was done being a victim. That role was familiar, but it no longer served me. I realized I didn't need to keep running tests or feeding the drama around my health. The truth was, when I wasn't at work, I was already starting to feel better. So I declared, with faith and knowing: **I am whole.** And when I choose to believe it, I know my body and mind follow.

The second ingredient was joy. I wasn't feeling it so I asked myself what brings me joy and then I did the activity. I needed to feel joy by actually doing the things that bring it alive, not just say the word. I wrote them down, I practiced them and the smile has become a permanent fixture. Now I know exactly where to turn when my brain tries to drag me back into negativity.

Work was the next piece of the puzzle. I decided that I am ready to help people, whatever that looks like, as long as joy is a part of it. I even feel open to full-time work again. For now, I'm waiting, trusting my higher self, my guardian angel, and my spirit guides to show me the way.

I feel cautiously optimistic. The cloud has moved past. Life feels lighter, brighter, and I am deeply grateful.

 **Practice:** Can you remember a time when a mindset shift changed everything for you? How can you shift your perspective today? Make a choice that lifts you up.

Invitation 48: BEing

Are you following your joy yet? Let go of anything that is not in alignment with what you are choosing to experience.

First, let me acknowledge this: if I hadn't been in so much physical and emotional pain, I never would have picked up that book, joined classes or connected with people instrumental in my growth.

It's the same way I look back on my past. Had I not gotten myself into massive trouble years ago, I wouldn't have gotten sober, 33 years and counting. When you're in it, it's hard to see the point. But life keeps reminding us: *trust the process*. You can't always see the big picture.

So how am I following my joy?

The other day, I realized I hated running on the treadmill in the garage. I'd moved it there over the summer, but it drained me. So instead, I leashed up Zelda and went out for a run. When was the

last time we did that? It was exhilarating! A beautiful autumn morning. Well almost, since it was still technically summer. This time of year I enjoy the various types of clouds.

Since declaring that victimhood was an old story, my body has felt amazing. My truth is this: I am choosing to BE or show up as joy, love, prosperity, and wholeness. Any thought that doesn't match that truth, I question it, then dismiss it.

Last night I dreamed of students again. In the dream, I told them, "I might get emotional, because beginnings and endings are hard for me." It felt like a tribute and a goodbye. Maybe that's true of this season in my life too. I don't know what's next, but I trust it will involve helping others in some way.

Helping is what I love. I do it through teaching, coaching, writing, speaking, and creating content. What do you love to do? Trust that the right opportunities will come easily, joyfully, and in perfect timing.

For now, I think I'll rearrange my room so I feel joy every time I enter it.

♥ **Practice:** What is one small step you can take today to follow **your** joy? It can be the smallest thing. Really be present in your joy.

Invitation 49: Emotions

It's important to feel our emotions when they arise. As Neale Donald Walsch says, "Express rather than suppress." The simplicity of that truth has stayed with me.

I turned to my Grief Recovery Handbook and looked at one of the exercises. It asked me to list the major points of loss in my life. I spent some quiet time going through them, and wow, I realized how much grief I still carried. I was grieving losses from 15 years ago, grieving certain decisions I had made. No wonder I've struggled with depression off and on. I thought I had grieved back then, but clearly there was more to express.

I've always hated how uncomfortable it feels to sit fully with certain emotions. So I've learned to push through quickly, doing things to "get happy" again. But when we don't allow the full expression of sadness, or anger, or whatever shows up, it stays in the body. It can come back later as depression or even physical illness.

Now I'm learning something new: the importance of letting myself feel the emotions until they are complete. I must be willing to be uncomfortable, and stay with it until it moves through.

The cry I had today felt good. Earlier in the day I found myself outside, noticing beauty, snapping pictures of flowers and taking in the brilliance of the colors of nature. There were happy moments mixed in with the sadness.

Life is.

 **Practice:** Is there something in your life that you pushed through without really expressing the emotions of that moment? Try not to be afraid of them as you sit with them and say hello again.

Invitation 50: Thought Awareness

Your thoughts are not YOU.

For much of my life, my thoughts decided whether I had a good day or not. They ran the show, and I felt powerless to whatever emotion followed. Have you ever felt like you had no power over your emotions?

For years, I ran from painful emotions. This avoidance only led to destructive behaviors. Now, I'm slowly learning how to work with my mind, letting my greater self, my soul, guide the way.

This morning, I woke up with a dark cloud hanging over me again. I had many fearful thoughts especially because I put in my notice and I am still grieving loss and this unfamiliar world. I chose to sit with my feelings and simply notice them.

Here's what I realized as I analyzed the validity of these thoughts. Some of the thoughts were accurate but many were distorted. When I connected with my greater self, I could see a bigger

picture. My intuition was nudging me forward for a reason. New opportunities are on the way. These challenges are shaping me into the greatest version of myself.

By accepting the discomfort, I began to notice the beauty in it. I finally understood how you can feel sad and happy at the very same time. That realization brought peace, and with it, the strength to start the day.

♥ **Practice:** Pay attention to your thoughts. Which ones are true, and which ones are distortions? True thoughts will bring peace. Distorted thoughts bring distress. That's how you know the difference.

Invitation 51: Accepting Emotions

Give yourself permission to accept and feel your emotions until they're complete.

Today I'm choosing to allow myself to feel sadness fully, without judging it.

When it comes to my health concerns, I can see the specialists and get the tests, or I can choose not to. Either way, the intention is the same: observe, choose action or non-action, then let it go and return to the present moment.

My grief counselor and coach, JR Westen, inspired me to offer my courses for free, allowing people to donate if they feel called. That simple decision sparked a tiny glimmer of excitement in me. It felt more right than any marketing strategy ever has. We shall see. I'm playing around with this energy of abundance.

I'm also practicing giving myself permission to simply be me. Instead of asking others if it's okay to skip a staff meeting, I decide

for myself. And it feels incredibly freeing and empowering. These practices seem so easy, and maybe they are to others. But many of us make decisions unconsciously without realizing how very limiting they are.

♥ **Practice:** Do you give yourself permission to do the things that serve you? How could you take care of yourself today?

Invitation 52: Thought Training

The thinking problem explained. Have you ever just felt exhausted by your fearful thoughts? Rest assured, there is a path forward.

This morning, during mindfulness and breath work, I realized just how exhausting it feels when I battle myself. My mind keeps pulling me into the darkness while my heart offers a different truth. Have you ever felt that back and forth battle?

Later, while making soup, I thought about my sister, a warrior with a heart of gold, who lived fully even while battling cancer. She didn't live in fear. She told me over and over that she was happy. She biked, laughed, and found joy every single day. Remembering her reminded me: the best way I can honor her is to do the same. To show up. To choose happiness and presence even when life feels heavy.

That perspective shift made me pick up David D. Burns' book *Feeling Great*. His cognitive therapy methods are powerful

because they help you see how distorted your thoughts can be and then replace them with something more true, more helpful.

Here's what I discovered when I wrote mine out:

My thought: I don't like change. It's overwhelming and too much. I can't handle it.

My new thought: You've gone through many changes in your life, and they always brought you somewhere better.

My thought: I'm a failure. Nothing is selling.

My new thought: Wow, you really care. You held a full-time job, wrote courses, and six books, all at once.

I've always had a thinking problem; however, through acceptance, I'm learning to train my mind to help me instead of hurting me.

♥ **Practice:** Write down your thoughts and especially the thoughts you keep repeating. Study them. Then change them into something more loving and true.

Invitation 53: Symbols and Signs

I call this process the unraveling. We are shedding, releasing and healing to awaken to who we really are and who we wish to be.

I woke up today with the spark of autumn excitement running through my veins. Halloween, one of my favorite times of year, is approaching and it stirs my spirit. What time of year do you enjoy?

Last night I dreamed of a tiny baby bird struggling against the wind. At first I wondered if I should bring her back to her flock, but instead I trusted my instinct. She was heading in my direction, so I walked behind her to help her fly. At times, I carried her. I could feel her little feet resting on my arm, and then she would lift off again, trying once more against the wind. Together, we kept moving forward, toward the ocean.

I worried she might need water, and then remembered the ocean isn't drinkable. My plan was to prepare fresh water for her before she took flight again.

What a powerful symbol that was for me, and it brought a smile to my face. My whole life I've looked to others to tell me I'm ok. I am now learning to give that love and support to myself.

The exercises from Dr. David D. Burns also settled something in me, stirring excitement for my dreams again. I was reminded of the visions Will and I have always shared. One dream already fulfilled: raising a beautiful, caring son into this world. Now, I sense it's time to revisit the unfinished dreams, and I feel curious about this next chapter.

I am also playing with my intuition about my part-time job. I have always **followed the feathers**, but a recent moment at work threw me for a loop. A young boy walked up to me with a single feather, beaming, and held it right in front of me. He had no way of knowing that this is a sacred symbol and sign for me. I can't get the image out of my mind. It was very synchronistic that I will keep listening within.

Do you have an intuitive symbol or sign that helps you stay on path?

I still cry and sometimes it's from joy, sometimes from sadness, and sometimes simply to release what feels like every pent-up emotion stored in my body. Each tear feels like an unraveling, a letting go of what no longer serves me. Are you allowing yourself to feel the emotions as they come up?

♥ **Practice:** Have you ever had a dream so powerful that it made you stop, reflect, and look deeply at its meaning? What message might your soul have been sending you?

Invitation 54: Thought Truths

Pick your thoughts apart and look at them from a new perspective.

As someone who has struggled with anxiety and depression since I was young, I found tremendous relief through practices like HeartMath and the cognitive tools in *Feeling Great* by David D. Burns, MD. After writing down my thoughts and feelings, I was able to see the distortions clearly. Then, by replacing them with positive truths, the depression and anxiety lifted. This completely coincides with what I am learning in the CWG mentor program as well.

My mind has led me astray and I imagine I'm not the only one. Take a solid look at your thoughts. Add in meditation or mindfulness by bringing your soul into the process, and things begin to look and feel clearer.

Low and behold, I decided to stay at this job a little longer as I become more clear about who I am and what I want. I have fallen

in love with these children, and since I've realized I'm a **helper**, it feels right to stay ... for now. I could not get the image of the little boy, holding up a feather, out of my mind. This is what's in front of me right now so I am staying put. Sharing my authenticity with the company is freeing too. They know that it might be temporary. Man, that feels good!

When I really accepted the love I had for them and how I was helping, I had an amazing week with them. Perspective is everything!

It is freeing to put your truth out there as I did with the organization. I'm also practicing daily listening, being present, and sharing love with others. When I found myself thinking negatively about someone in the organization, I stopped and gave thanks for who they were. The information helped me get more clear about what I want to experience with the people I work with.

Everyone serves a purpose in your life. They either mirror something within you that needs healing or they provide you with information in some way. For me, this experience has made me more aware of who I am. Sometimes we only discover who we

truly are by first experiencing who we are not. It has also allowed me the opportunity to practice not sweating the small stuff.

♥ **Practice:** Are you honest with yourself so you can then be honest with others? How are you showing up for yourself today, with honesty? Authenticity is a gift you give to yourself and to others as it allows them to move in a direction that serves them. It's a win for all.

Invitation 55: Thought Distortions

Your thoughts aren't always telling the truth. They can lie to us.

When we pause, question them, and look with kindness ... healing begins.

When we are in the middle of a tough time, whether from grief, physical pain, or massive change, the light is just around the bend. The hard part is that we can't always see it while we're in it. We forget that we don't have the big picture. A grander version of ourselves is waiting to be born, and this passage is preparing us for that.

I don't know about you, but every time I've gone through a rough patch, when the light finally returns, it feels exhilarating and freeing. And almost always, it brings big changes for the better.

As mentioned, one tool that helps is learning to question our thoughts.

Here's an example: If the thought says, "I am a failure," that's distorted. The truth might be something like, "I care deeply about what I do and what I bring to the world. That makes me responsible and caring." See the shift?

When I wrote down my own thoughts and feelings, then replaced the distortions with new truths, I literally felt a cloud lift. The light that had always been there began to shine through.

This practice leads to more and more positive thinking, which then creates a new reality. That doesn't mean we skip our emotions. No. We feel them fully until they're complete, so they don't sit in our bodies festering.



Practice: Continue paying attention to your thoughts. When needed, change your perspective by replacing the distortions into thoughts of positivity and/or truth.

Invitation 56: Story Awareness

Thoughts are stories we continually tell ourselves.

For so long, I decided whether I could enjoy something based on a story I told myself. Snow reminded me of a painful time, rain felt depressing because it reminded me of other painful childhood feelings and on and on it went. I had allowed myself to be a victim of my stories.

The awareness of this is almost breathtaking. These days I'm noticing my thoughts and paying attention to what I say. If a story no longer serves me or doesn't reflect the best version of myself, I question it. Then I create a new moment.

It's fun and joyful to be present with a quiet mind. The noticing of Earth's delights and all its beauty feels mesmerizing, like seeing the world for the first time. I walk outside with a smile on my face, heart lit up.

This summer, I didn't recognize myself during this change, and that scared me. Now it excites me. I feel comfortable in the unknown, where a week ago I was petrified.

All change is for the greatest good. Life, God, the Universe, whatever name you give it, is evolving through us. Since we are all one with all this is, we are all evolving and becoming.

What a fascinating time of awakening. I used to think I was awake, but I see now that I only had glimpses. I wasn't fully walking the talk and I knew it. I was caught in my mind, disconnected from my soul. I played the victim in my mind all of the time. Now I feel the alignment again, waking up from that unconscious slumber. I am certain this experience was created because I wanted to grow and evolve into the best version of myself.

Make friends with the observer in you, your soul. Allow fear to leave the body or dissolve by not feeding it. If it appears, notice it, but then make a different choice.

♥ **Practice:** Where is your energy going? What are the stories you entertain about your life? Do they serve the best version of you or would you like to create a new story or way of being?

Invitation 57: Support And Discovery

Everyone needs support on their spiritual journey.

For me, the process began by seeking out communities that aligned with my spiritual growth. I took Foundations for Living at the Center for Spiritual Living (formerly called Religious Science) and then much later Spirit Paths with Gerry Starnes. I completed this first as a student and later as an apprentice.

Spiritually, I've been a sponge soaking up everything I've learned. Along the way, I studied courses that taught me how to heal myself and others, connected with my intuition, and even learned how to communicate with animals. I've been a seeker for 30 plus years, learning and experimenting, and eventually created my own course, *Authentic Living*, to help others gain clarity and live in alignment. When I started, I had no idea who I was or what I wanted. It may be easier for you.

Here's a simple place to begin:

- Strip away everything others told you who you were and think back to an early memory of joy. What were you doing?
- Then move through your life, moment by moment, where you felt true joy, peace, or freedom.
- What patterns do you notice? Are there trends that keep showing up?
- Now look at your life today. Where does love and joy show up for you right now? Do you see similarities or do you want to bring more of that joy into your life?

Another place where joy can flourish is in our relationships. A powerful question to ask is:

What would love do now?

Everyone who shows up in our life is a mirror. If someone triggers us, that's a sign of something within us that needs our attention. When I love all of Will, I am really learning to love all of me.

For years, I carried patterns of fear, fear of intimacy, fear of commitment. When I met Will, I knew he was the one I wanted to work through those fears with. It wasn't easy. At times, leaving

seemed easier. But I made a decision to choose love one day at a time. Thirty years later, he is my best friend and life partner.

Love doesn't always mean staying. Sometimes love means forgiving, walking away, having a hard and crucial conversation, or taking a stand. But love is always freeing. When we love everything, we release the grip of fear and victimhood. It's freeing and empowering.

A big part of my growth came from surrounding myself with people who didn't reinforce victimhood. I had to stop pointing the finger at Will and turn the mirror toward myself. What was I doing, or not doing, to bring joy into my own life? That became the start of discovering who I was, what I wanted, and how I wanted to show up with love every day.

Even after thirty years and counting, the journey never ends. The last few months have been a huge eye-opener. I thought I had it all together, but realized how much more growing and becoming I could do. It's taken loss, change, and painful endings to seek the help I needed to help me evolve.

Dr. Joe Dispenza suggests that before you reach for your phone in the morning, pause and set an intention. Choose an elevated state such as joyful, loving or confident. Breathe gratitude into your heart, visualize your future self living that dream, and hold that state for 15 minutes. I was thrilled to learn I had already been doing that; now I just try and make sure it happens before I reach for the world on my phone.

♥ **Practice:** Do you have a support network or tribe? Do you have people in your life who tell you the truth, with love? Compassion is important, but if people around you reinforce your victimhood, it can keep you stuck. Look instead for people who empower you, who help you connect with your own inner wisdom. You already have the answers inside. Enjoy discovering you.

Invitation 58: Happiness

Trust the process of your life.

We can feel like we are in a void when moving through big change or a new chapter, especially when everything has been stripped away.

I find myself looking into the future, trying to imagine my wildest and greatest dreams coming true, yet I'm still not always sure what that looks like.

So my focus is on being present with what is and embodying love, joy and being helpful. I trust the rest will work itself out.

Finishing this book, with the hope it helps others, is one of my dreams. So is being part of a community, though I'm not yet sure what that looks like. And maybe that's best. We can't see the big picture, so we allow our soul to fill in the details like the who, the when and the how.

I try to keep it simple. What about you? What's the greatest idea you hold about who you are and who you want to become? What's your best version of you? How do you want to show up in the world?

Through the CWG mentor program, I was given a homework assignment to be completed at the grocery store. I was to ask ten random people what makes them happy, what brings them peace, and whether they feel the divine within them. At first, I balked. I thought, "No way, I'm not doing this." But even with great resistance, I did it anyway.

When I got to the store, I told myself, I'll just ask one person and feel good about it.

Nope. It didn't turn out that way.

I met a woman whose eyes lit up. Her whole reason for being was to help people. She worked the checkout and loved her job! It was contagious! She showed me around and guided me to other workers I could ask. This woman, at the checkout area at my local Walmart, makes the world brighter! Love IS contagious and she is changing the world!

Once I started, I kept going. And you know what? It felt amazing, both during and after. The kind people I encountered absolutely took my breath away. It was a beautiful experience.

What I discovered was that the majority of answers were basically the same. Most of the people said family and helping people made them happy. How cool is that?

We really aren't so different. What we value is often strikingly similar. Sure, material things can bring happiness, and there's nothing wrong with wanting that, but it's usually fleeting. In fact, what most people shared during those brief chats at the store was that their deepest joy came from helping others and being surrounded by loved ones. What struck me most were the smiles on people's faces when I asked, "What makes you happy?"

 **Practice:** What makes you happy? How do you want to show up for life? Where do you want to focus your energy? And how can you live as the best version of you, today?

Invitation 59: Your Value

Knowing our value can be enough.

I've been sitting with that thought for a while.

At my job, I enjoy what I do. I'm teaching students social and emotional learning, skills they crave, and clearly haven't been taught. That feels important.

But there are other parts of the job I struggle with. Honestly, because of that, I've wanted to leave. And yet, yesterday a new counselor came in and told me it was the best experience she'd had since starting. She loved what I was teaching and even learned a calming strategy herself.

That made me pause. Do I need feedback? Or is it enough to know my own worth and skills, and to simply show up for this little pod of 19 kids? Maybe it doesn't need to be for praise or for show, but for the students. Because I know I am making a difference.

When I settle into that thought, I feel more peace. I've always loved performing for others, and I won't deny or judge that part of me. We're all made the way we are, expressions of God. But maybe I'm waking up to the fact that I don't need constant validation to be happy. I know I make a difference.

And that can be enough.

♥ **Practice:** What are some of your gifts? What do you enjoy doing, being, or creating? Where do you feel valued and where do you value yourself? Has anyone ever told you how good you are at something?

Invitation 60: Take Part

When we choose to show up for life each day, it begins to take on more meaning, and a steady rhythm emerges.

I've been starting my mornings with intention, heart coherence (heart-centered breathing), and visualization. It has made a world of difference in my life. I'm realizing how much joy I feel in my work with the children. At last, I've embraced and accepted this new chapter.

It took time to sort through the emotions coursing through me. I even had a second interview yesterday with that company that I felt excited by. I waffled a bit as I gained more insight. When I stay true to my purpose, following joy and helping people, I can see I'm exactly where I need to be ... for now. I love my work with the children. I'm having fun, I feel joyful with them, and my body feels physically fantastic.

In each moment I try to ask, How would my Higher Self show up right now? I've also found more confidence in declaring to myself

that **I know my value.** That shift has helped me let go of needing constant external validation. Still, based on conversations I've had, I see that what I'm doing is helping others, and that's confirmation I'm on the right path.

I also keep seeing feathers everywhere. For me, that's a sign I'm where I need to be.

♥ **Practice:** Do you have an internal system that reminds you you're on path? Do you have a daily practice that helps you connect with your heart or soul? The logical brain is important, but when we merge it with the wisdom of the soul, our awareness expands. We begin to access guidance and insight we couldn't perceive before.

Invitation 61: Awakenings

We all go through cycles of awakening individually and collectively.

Twenty-four years ago, our country changed forever. I remember it clearly. My son was only a few months old, and I sat glued to the screen, worrying about his future. I wanted to protect his innocence forever.

He's a young man now, learning how to live his best life in a world that can feel uncertain. Maybe you have also experienced uncertainty in the changing times and with the people you love.

I believe that the more people who awaken to the truth of who they are, the more our world will know peace, acceptance, and joy. It begins with one person at a time. And while we came here to experience light and love, I believe we also came here to walk through the dark. Because without one, we wouldn't fully understand or experience the other. Yin and yang.

I had my first major awakening thirty years ago. It was full of synchronicities, aha moments, and magic. That season of life still shines bright in my memory. Over time, life got busy. I raised a son, found work I loved, and built a career. My path unfolded through intent and trust.

Today, my practices are simple: setting an intention each morning, heart coherence and visualization. Recently, I even pictured my highest self breathing purple light into my heart, filling me with knowledge, love, joy, and peace. And I felt the effects immediately.

That's what I want to remind you. We can let go knowing that a part of us is helping us to evolve. We don't always know what comes next but trusting the process of our own life can bring peace and freedom. I wish the same peace and joy for you.

♥ **Practice:** When life feels heavy, do you let go and trust in your own evolution? How can you connect to your greater you? Moving into a state of love, in spite of what's going on, can raise your vibration and allow things to flow more gently. Love is the mover and shaker of life.

Invitation 62: Mind/Body/Soul

When mind, body, and soul work together, things align.

Every day we have a choice. When you're in the trenches, it doesn't feel like that. It feels endless, like the heaviness will never lift. But often the negativity begins with our judgment of what we feel and dwelling on it. Emotions are meant to move through. They come and go. The power lies in what we choose to focus on. Where our energy goes, our life flows.

I've learned this the hard way. I've been way up, and I've been way down, and it was always because of the direction of my thoughts. So many times, I believed I was powerless to my emotions. But the truth is I never was.

Here's what I've come to see: mind, body, and soul must work together if we want to create the best version of ourselves.

The soul offers insight through presence, stillness, meditation, and mindfulness.

The body shares its truth through sensations and needs such as nourishment, rest and movement. Even doing a body scan and noticing what emotions are held where, can unlock healing.

The mind is the tool of logic, but if we let it run unchecked, it runs the show. It's important to be aware. You are not your mind.

We are creators, whether we're awake to it or not. The stories we tell ourselves every day become the reality we step into. If you don't like the story, you get to change it.

Our thoughts can distort reality, but when we see the distortion clearly, we can return to presence. From there, energy shifts and a new reality unfolds.

Sometimes it takes losing so much to awaken the seeker within. And from that place, the most unexpected blessings can emerge.

♥ **Practice:** How do you integrate your mind, body, and soul? What thoughts or stories need rewriting in your life? And if you

stepped into the best version of yourself today, how would you experience life differently?

Invitation 63: Self Acceptance

Treat yourself with the same kindness you give to others.

Make peace with yourself.

For so long, I was in the habit of beating myself up, but now I'm enjoying this rhythm of countering negative distortions with truth.

My cat is sick, and at first I started to get on my case over an encounter when I tried to take a mouse away from him. But I caught the distortion quickly. I told myself that my intent was to help, and I reminded myself of that truth. It shifted my state from blame to love.

When I worked through an exercise in *The Grief Recovery Handbook*, by Russell Friedman and John W. James, I had the chance to “talk” with loved ones who have passed and release any remorse I'd been carrying. It was freeing.

It's so important to make peace with yourself, no matter what modality works for you. Forgiving yourself can begin by realizing you did the best you could in that moment, with the information you had. We all carry different kinds of trauma, and none of us needs to be perfect. People aren't drawn to a "perfect" version of us anyway. They're drawn to our realness, who we are in that moment.

So let yourself make peace with who you are. Lighten that load. The more you practice it, the easier it becomes, and the lighter you will feel.

 **Practice:** What do you need to let go of today?

Invitation 64: Non-Judgment

Practice non-judgment and allow the moment to be as it is.

When emotions rise up, practice meeting them without judgment. For so long, I was quick to criticize myself or try to change the way I felt. Now I'm learning to simply notice the emotions that come up, allow them, and then move gently back to the present.

This week brought a mix of challenges. I had assumptions about possible work that didn't pan out. My cat had to be taken to the ER, and we spent a lot of money to save him. It wasn't easy, but the truth is the work obviously wasn't meant for me, my cat was saved, and we had the means/credit cards to care for him. Still, even with those blessings, it's okay to feel sadness around the experience.

On the flip side, sometimes sadness or drama is quite familiar to us and so releasing the story is what we are now ready for. Practice becoming aware and staying present without judgment.

Today it's a beautiful fall day, one of my favorite times of year.
I'm soaking it in.

♥ **Practice:** What judgments do you have about yourself? Is it time to let them go?

Invitation 65: Vigilance

Be vigilant for the Love of You!

It's amazing how vigilant one must be when changing lifetime patterns. I felt blue on Sunday and felt powerless as if I had no control over it. For a long time, I believed I had no power over how I felt from day to day. I'm slowly discovering how much power we actually have over those emotional states. Our body listens to the messages we feed it, and our thoughts run quietly and constantly, often without us noticing.

Now I choose to be more aware and vigilant, to catch those thoughts in the moment and call out the distortions or old beliefs that no longer serve me. When I looked closely at my thoughts I could see the distortion. My cat had to be hospitalized and it was the norm to blame myself. Then when I got a raging headache on Sunday, I went into fear mode. The focus on negative thoughts creates disturbance in our lives.

These are the truths I came to after seeing through the distortions:

- I care so much about my cat; I even went to the vet twice in one month with another appointment scheduled. I care!
- Being fearful about the cost tells me that I am responsible.
- The diagnosis was missed, but thankfully, he got the help he needed.
- The cost, while incredibly high, will be paid somehow. When I ask the question, "How is this situation serving my soul agenda?" I realize it's an incredible opportunity to practice prosperity consciousness.

It takes vigilance to change a lifetime of patterns.

As a teacher, I know that many people notice only the negative behaviors, overlooking the million positive, on-task behaviors happening in class. Focus on the positive—on what you want. You will see more of it! Be vigilant for the love within you.

Letting go of judgment is a work in progress that might take time.

♥ **Practice:** My first spiritual teacher told us to count how many old junky cars we saw for the whole week. We reported back that we saw a lot! She then asked how many Mercedes cars we saw and we reported that we saw zero. She flipped it for the next week and I'm sure you can guess the results. It was a huge wake up call for us! We see what we expect to see. Focus on what you wish to see today. Declare it!

Invitation 66: Contentment While Searching

Where do you find contentment in your life?

For me, the sun is shining, my cat is healing, and I'm grateful for friends, family, and good health.

Still, my spirit is becoming restless. Have you ever felt like you have everything you need, but you are still longing for more?

My current job works for now, but I feel indecisive about my next move. I am aware this is a "bridge" job. When I think back, I stayed in teaching for the satisfaction of helping students, the schedule, the rhythm of the calendar year, and the fact that no two days were ever the same. Have you had a role in your life that gave you structure and purpose? I loved—and felt proud of—the work I did. I thought I was done, but now I'm not so sure.

And that's okay. We get to discover or rediscover new parts of ourselves each day; I believe that's the point of being here.

I'm giving myself time to really listen. If you could create your ideal work experience, what would it look like? For me, I want time to explore coaching more deeply and build confidence in that area, while trusting that my greater self has my back.

Most importantly, I'm searching ... and I'm not even sure what I'm searching for. On one hand, I know what I seek is within me, yet I wonder if I'm looking for my next tribe—a place where I feel at home.

♥ **Practice:** No matter what is going on, what is one positive thing about your day? And where do you feel most at home?

Invitation 67: The Power Of Now

Embrace that it's already here! That is the power of now.

Do you ever wonder why your posts, projects, or work don't get the engagement you hoped for? Why do others seem more popular, and you find yourself asking, "What am I doing wrong?"

That's where I was recently until meditation gave me my answer. I practiced heart coherence by breathing wisdom into my heart and quieting my mind enough to listen. And this is what I heard: *You keep waiting for something to happen. Embrace that it already is.*

Of course! I've told others to "rehearse until it's real," but I hadn't been applying it to myself. The truth is, I already AM helping people. I remembered the quiet feedback I've received: the likes I do get, the private messages from people who don't even use social media much but tell me they pay attention. One friend even said, "This is your calling."

The error wasn't in my work, it was in comparing myself to others. Comparison always pulls us out of our highest self.

What if we stopped chasing approval and simply celebrated our own gifts? What if we did it just because it brings us joy? That's when we're truly living our purpose. We are present, authentic, and aligned with love.

Right now, as I sit on the porch with Zelda, watching the squirrels play and listening to the birds, I feel that truth. The peace is breathtaking. This is joy.

It's September, but I think I'll pull out the Halloween decorations. Why wait? Joy can be simple.

♥ **Practice:** How do you let go of comparisons and self-judgment? This moment of **Now** is all yours!! Who are you and what do you want? Be it now.

Invitation 68: Letting Go

Freedom begins the moment you let go of old stories.

There comes a time when we decide, fully and finally, to let go. We behaved the way we did for a reason, based on what we knew then, the pain we carried and the survival tools we learned. Make peace with that. You did the best you could with the information you had at the time.

There is power in looking your perceived demons in the eye and saying, “I see you. Enough.” We spend so much energy running from what scares us, and when we turn and meet it, we often discover we are stronger than we thought, and it no longer has the same hold.

I have a recurring dream: I’m about to die. There are variations, but there is always that plunge, such as the plane going down. Then I surrender, and realize I’m still alive. What was all the fuss about? Waking up feels a bit like that. You see, becoming awake is

noticing what inside is keeping you small. When you finally embrace that part, it often turns out to be less than you feared.

It's freedom.

♥ **Practice:** What do you need to look at and release so you can feel the freedom of living the best version of yourself?

Invitation 69: Shadow

Love ALL parts of you, including the parts you deemed unworthy.

Do you love all parts of yourself like the shadow and the light? We need both to fully experience who we are. How would we even know love unless we've felt its opposite? Our illusion of being separate from Source (God, Higher Self) gives us the contrast we need to remember who we truly are: **Love**.

So if regrets, pain, guilt, or shame are keeping you stuck, pause and listen. Talk to that part of you with the awareness you now have. One practice that's helped me is a shamanic exercise called recapitulation. In meditation, I revisit the painful memory and rewrite the story with the wisdom I carry today. Often it brings peace, closure, and forgiveness. I learned this from Gerry C. Starnes, author of *Spirit Paths*, during my time as both a participant and an apprentice in his program. You'll find more details about this practice in The Daily Connection section at the end of the book.

When part of me still clings to regret, I practice giving that part so much love. I remind myself I did the best I could with what I had at the time. We weren't meant to be perfect, we were meant to have a human experience. Forgiving or accepting ourselves and others is the way forward, because holding on only hurts us.

I once struggled with someone close to me who I felt didn't respect me. Then I decided to see them differently: as a child of God doing their best with the trauma they carried. I also affirmed their respect for me, even before I felt it was true. What happened? The next time we met, they treated me completely differently.

Who changed? Me!

We create outer conditions based on what's going on within. We are always writing the story. And if we believe this whole life is an illusion, why not write a story filled with peace, joy, and love?

♥ **Practice:** Is there a situation in your life you would like to rewrite? Go for it! What story do you want to experience instead?

Invitation 70: Conflicting Emotions

It's possible to hold sadness and gratitude at the same time.

It's natural to hold conflicting emotions. The key is to embrace them all, then choose where to place your focus. I still mourn those I've lost, but I'm also grateful for the love they gave me and the impact they had in my life. Gratitude has become one of the most powerful ways I start my day.

There are mornings I don't feel it right away, but when I practice breathing in elevated states of being, I feel the pivot.

Gratitude multiplies when we let it. So if you feel no gratitude, and you are having a hard time, start small. It could be as simple as being grateful for running water, a bed to sleep in, or something to eat, and before long, it grows.

Do you have supportive people in your life who accept you and encourage your full embrace of yourself? Do you have people who refuse to let you sink into victimhood and gently remind

you of your strength? Because of those people in my life, I learned how to do it for myself. Are you learning to listen to your joy, to release the old stories that no longer serve you?

This morning, I caught myself spiraling into one of those old stories. Instead of staying there, I stopped and reminded myself of the truth: I am strong, and at this moment, all is well. Our misery comes not from the facts but from the stories we tell ourselves about them. Once you see the distortion in the story, it loses its grip. With practice, it gets easier to redirect and choose again.

As I explore my next move in life, I was recently reminded: 'You have no problems. You are exactly where you choose to be.' At first, that might sound harsh, but when I let it sink in, I realized it's true. It's the ultimate form of freedom.

When doubt creeps in, I write it down or talk it through with someone I trust, and I usually find clarity right there. Then I shift my focus back to what I wish to create, what I wish to experience, or what I wish to call into my life.

♥ **Practice:** In this season of change, try starting each day with gratitude or an elevated state of BEing you wish to explore. In

addition, surround yourself with people who support you on your path.

Invitation 71: What Is

Acceptance Brings Peace.

Do you ever find yourself replaying the past and missing people who've moved on, or longing for a moment you wish you could relive? I do this often. My mind loves to wander back to old experiences, wishing I could feel them again.

What I'm learning is to notice the emotions that surface, feel them fully, and then let them float away, like watching a stick float down a river. Change is our one true constant, yet it's the thing I've resisted most. No wonder it's been such a struggle.

However, when I move into acceptance, I return to the present. And from that place, I can create new, beautiful memories that will one day hold the same sweetness as the old ones.

I'll be honest, patience has never come easily to me. I like to rush through discomfort. But I've been practicing being comfortable in my discomfort.

Throughout this whole process, I've been saying, "I feel weird," over and over, which only keeps me stuck and feeling off. When I shift my focus to an intention for the day, like loving, joyful, or peaceful, my whole energy changes. However, change **can** feel weird as we navigate a whole new terrain. It takes time to settle into a new way of being.

Acceptance doesn't mean pretending everything's fine. It means letting yourself grieve, laugh, cry, or sit in stillness without judgment. Because when we stop resisting, the peace that's been there all along begins to surface.

 **Practice:** What are you learning to accept in your life and how might you bring more beauty into the present moment?

Invitation 72: The Void

Learn how to be present in the void.

Once we awaken, when awareness deepens and parts of our “old” life or identity fall away, we often step into what feels like the void. It can feel unsettling, even scary. Familiarity calls to us, and that’s natural. This is the time to be gentle with ourselves as we ease into the next chapter.

Try not to push or force things. The void has its own rhythm.

I’ve noticed restlessness in myself too, moments where I wonder why nothing seems to be happening. I create, I share, but often receive little feedback. What I’m learning is this: the void isn’t empty. It’s a place of preparation. Things are unfolding in their own time.

Here’s what helps me:

Releasing the specifics: the who, what, when, and how.

Practicing patience, even with discomfort.

Listening to internal nudges and acting only when they feel aligned.

Being my own best friend and releasing the need for external validation.

Remembering that what others think of me is none of my business.

Getting into the feeling state of BEing helpful and doing what I love.

Recently, I noticed myself slipping into old habits at work and trying to prove my worth, to be the best. I've often been fueled by external validation. But I remembered that I don't need to prove anything anymore. My worth already exists. Now my practice is to feel it, embody it, and release attachment to what anyone else thinks.

The more I allow this, the more magical life feels. Yesterday I paused to photograph a kind of flower I had never seen before. That moment reminded me that even in the void, there is beauty, there is presence, there is becoming.

♥ **Practice:** Be your own best friend today. What would you tell her if she were struggling?

BECOMING

Invitation 73: Channeling Emotions

If you feel the emotion of anger, channel it.

Have you ever gotten so sick and tired of repeating the same pattern that you finally shouted, “Enough!”?

Back in 1995, after years of failed relationships and heartbreak, that’s exactly what I did. I could finally see what I was creating and why. I feared intimacy and commitment, so of course I chased after what I couldn’t have and ran away from what I could have. We do that sometimes. We set up scenarios to reinforce the beliefs we have.

One day, after another breakup, I lost it. I yelled, “That’s enough! I don’t deserve this. I am deserving of love!” That anger turned into fire, and I channeled it into what I did want in my life instead.

Alone in my apartment, my rant became a declaration. I imagined the ideal relationship, thanked God for it as if it was already real,

and spoke it into being. It felt powerful, alive, undeniable. I created a list of qualities that I wanted and thanked God for this love of my life. I literally felt that my soulmate was here; I felt so loved, and so in love! That experience taught me that everything is within. The spark that creates reality is in us.

Months later, he showed up physically—my husband Will.

Lately, I've felt that same spark with work. At first, my affirmations felt flat, like I couldn't quite believe them. But I kept going until belief grew into excitement, and excitement grew into knowing. We create from our **knowing**.

We can rewrite the story anytime we choose.

For years, I hated the rain; it depressed me. Yesterday, I decided to rewrite that story. I went outside, let the drops fall on my skin, and gave thanks for how it nourishes the earth.

See it. Feel it. Affirm your truth.

 **Practice:** Write or rewrite a story then take action with your new idea.

Invitation 74: Declaration

It Starts with a Declaration.

At some point on the journey, we all reach a crossroads where we're simply done with surviving. We decide it's time to live fully. That's where the transformation begins.

The tools are already there. We practice. We show up. And slowly, over time, we notice ourselves evolving. These days, every time a negative thought or old pattern tries to insert itself, I declare, "Not today." I remind myself that this is happening, because I'm evolving into the best version of myself. That simple reminder allows the thought to move on and even turn into excitement.

Last summer, I felt like my life was over. I crashed. Everything seemed fruitless—but in the middle of that darkness, a spark appeared. I followed the light to Neale Donald Walsch, Eckhart Tolle, David D. Burns, Marie Manuchehri, and others. I became a sponge and practiced.

It was hard at first, but practice built strength. The negativity that once ruled my days now gets looked at, addressed, and released. This includes that pesky victim mentality. It simply doesn't fit me anymore.

Sometimes things get worse before they get better. The energy is moving and outdated stuff is coming up and out so the new can take root.

You might be wondering when things will turn around just like I often have. Here's what I've learned: it turns around when we decide it's time. Instead of imagining "someday," imagine that someday is today.

♥ **Practice:** If you were living the best version of yourself and living your best life, what would you be doing right now? What's one small step you can take today to embody that?

Invitation 75: The Actor

Exhilaration Comes Next.

We wouldn't really understand the experience of joy fully without experiencing darkness. Both exist side by side, two sides of the same coin, shaping the richness of life. I believe our true essence is love and light, and yet we come here to play, to grow, and to experience it all.

This morning, I woke up exhilarated. The sky was clear, the air crisp with autumn, and I could feel the stirring inside me. By choosing again and again to focus on love, joy, and abundance, I've begun to truly feel them. From the outside, my life might not look perfect, but I'm living the best version of myself within. And that's the key to life.

If you're not feeling it yet, rehearse it. Step into it as though you're the best actor in the role of your life. Keep practicing until one day you realize ... it's no longer an act. It's you.

Pay attention to the nudges, the little signs. They're reminders that you're always evolving, always being guided toward joy. For me, that meant sticking with a part-time job I almost walked away from. What changed my mind? A small gesture from the children I work with—tiny feathers they gave me—that reminded me of joy and intuition. I trusted the nudge and stayed, even while a part of me thought, “Are you serious?” Now, I can't imagine being anywhere else at this moment.

Of course, there are other situations when you know it's time to move on. I retired before I knew my school was closing because I felt in my bones that my chapter there was done. As painful as that ending was, the school closing for good pushed me to stay true to that nudge and evolve in ways I couldn't have if I had stayed.

You are always evolving. Every experience, even the ones that feel uncertain, is shaping you into more of who you truly are.

♥ **Practice:** Where do you sense life is nudging you to stay ... or to let go?

Invitation 76: New Ideas

Have fun creating new stories every day!

As mentioned in an earlier entry, I used to hate Sundays. But one day I woke up and said, “I love Sundays! It’s my creative day.” **I’ve been saying it every Sunday since.**

We create a story with every thought we have. These days, I’m choosing to be conscious about the kinds of thoughts I entertain. And sure enough, my Sundays are filled with creativity and joy. I am having fun on Sundays.

What stories are you telling yourself about who you are and what you want? Lately, the states of being I’m choosing to focus on are love, joy and abundance. I often add peace and helpfulness into the mix. When I’m living from those states of being, I know I’m on the right path. What states of being do you want to embody? There are so many to choose from such as: freedom, expansion, prosperity, security, creativity, confidence, love, joy, and patience.

Even though I could focus on the bleak state of my finances, I choose not to. Instead, I declare that at this moment all needs are met. And they have been. Today, I received a paycheck I was not expecting, and it was more than I thought it would be. Gratitude spreads quickly, so I keep focusing on what I am thankful for. And it's a lot.

Life is a journey of self-discovery, one we get to experience with all of our senses. How cool is that?

 **Practice:** Today, enjoy your senses. Explore the sights, sounds, and smells around you, at this moment. This is your creation! Once we truly understand that the "story" is flexible, we realize the script can be changed at any moment.

Invitation 77: Expand

Expand your awareness of who you are.

What's the greatest idea you hold about your life?

Three months ago, I wanted to throw in the towel. I was filled with grief, physical pain, anxiety, and depression. My focus this entire year has been on becoming the best version of myself. Looking back, I realize a lot needed to be cleared out first.

It felt like there were critters living in the attic of my mind. Squashing them wasn't an option. Instead, I took out a magnifying glass and studied each one with curiosity and compassion. Some needed a gentle release back into the earth. Others needed care. In the end, I made peace with them all. Love and curiosity expanded my view and reminded me: we are the writers of our story, and it can be rewritten at any moment.

Today is a glorious autumn day. The sun is out, the birds are singing, and gratitude fills my heart, for my family, for health, and

for love. Joy doesn't have to be rare. It can become our norm when we choose it consciously, every single day.

I am thankful for this journey and experience that is called life, the shadows and the light.

 **Practice:** Go out in nature and study something closely, looking at every detail. If you have a magnifying lens, use it.

Invitation 78: Daily Choice

The greatest secret to living your best life, and becoming the best version of you, is that there is no secret. It's just a choice.

Every day when the monkey mind (inner critic) tries to sneak in, or when an old story or pattern creeps back into my thoughts, I stop and say, "Nah, not today." I remind myself that I am showing up as love and joy. Today I added compassion because of where my mind was trying to take me.

For a long time, I felt powerless to sustain this. I would master it, flip the switch, change my thinking, and create a new path countless times. The first time I learned this was in a Foundations for Living class with Maureen Christopher, my first mentor at the Center for Spiritual Living. (Formerly called Religious Science.)

I was a couple of years sober, and had been searching for a more positive community, when one day, out of the blue, my aunt mailed me a magazine called The Science of Mind. That's how I

found my way there. In a healing session, not affiliated with this community, the healer sent me spiraling down a dark path because of something “she picked up.” When I shared that fear with Maureen, she told me something that changed everything. She explained that when we entertain such thoughts, we attract all the darkness tied to them. She reminded me that I didn’t have to go there, and that at any moment, I could stop and create a new reality.

At that moment, I realized my power. And instantly, I felt lighter.

I’ve used this practice countless times since. If we’re not conscious, negativity can slip in, and before we know it, we’re anxious, worried, or weighed down.

Now I understand it’s simply a daily choice. That’s it. Every single day. And the more we practice, the easier it becomes.

Earth-shattering? Or just aware.

♥ **Practice:** Did somebody ever tell you who you were or what your truth was? Did you believe them? Why or why not? You get to decide.

Invitation 79: Rehearse

Rehearse until it feels real.

I've been saying this for decades, yet it's easy to lose sight when life happens. Some things are simply easier to manifest than others.

For me, creating my soulmate and finding meaningful work has come more easily than calling in abundance, prosperity, or my wildest dreams. And when we feel physically unwell, even creating good health can be a challenge. Anxiety has often been my foe, and I've worked hard to befriend all the shadow parts of myself.

So when I say "rehearse until it feels real," I mean act as if it's already here. What would you be doing if you knew you could not fail or if you had an unlimited supply?

I know that it's not always easy. My own stories and limiting ideas made prosperity harder for me. I had to face my shadows and make peace before things could change.

Every day, I wake up and write. I spend time doing the things I wish to make my living from, not because I'm being paid yet, but because they bring me joy. I trust the bills will be taken care of and they have been. Just today, I discovered something new: our mortgage has a grace period. That realization gave me breathing space and reminded me again to trust the process of my life.

However, we have struggled too. Years ago, when Will was laid off and I was home with a new baby, we tried to have "faith" it would all work out but there were no jobs for Will where we lived. We ended up in a hard spot, moving into my mom's house. That season left scars, and future decisions often carried the weight of trauma and fear.

This time, it feels different. We are listening to intuition instead of panic or fear. We're making choices from alignment, practicing prosperity consciousness, and trusting that abundance is already here. It took months of practice, but really, the shift can happen

in a single moment. We rewrite our stories all the time. I'm just being more conscious about it now.

♥ **Practice:** See and feel yourself living your best life or your dream. How does it feel? Breathe it into your heart for five minutes.

Invitation 80: Heart Coherence

Use heart coherence. It connects mind, body, and soul.

Research from the HeartMath Institute shows that the heart isn't just a physical organ. It acts as an "intelligence" that communicates with the brain, shaping our perceptions, emotions, and even our decisions.

This means your heart can be one of your greatest tools for balance, healing, and creation. Just a few minutes of focused practice can shift your state of being.

Here's how I've been blending different practices in my own way:

Begin by choosing at least two feeling states you want to embody today. I started with two or three regularly but over time, I have added in more: love, joy, prosperity, creativity, security, freedom, and expansion.

Once you've chosen your states, imagine a guide, or your own higher wisdom, gently breathing these essences directly into your heart.

On each inhale, feel those states filling your chest. On the exhale, let them spread throughout your whole body.

You can add any energy you wish to embody more fully: wisdom, patience, compassion etc. The heart sends messages to the brain, which in turn signals the body. When all align, you connect with your soul, your highest self.

One of my favorite times to practice this is before writing. If I don't know what I want to say, I imagine my highest self standing in front of me, blowing wisdom into my heart. As I breathe it in, the energy spreads through me, and suddenly, ideas sparkle to life.

Just 5–10 minutes a day with full attention can transform how you feel and how you show up in the world.

 **Practice:** Which feeling states do you want to breathe into your heart today? Choose at least one, feel it and breathe it into your heart for ten minutes.

Invitation 81: Soul's Path

Trust Your Soul's Path.

When you are acting from your soul, living what you came here to do, all your needs will be met.

There were many times I thought about returning to teaching for that consistent paycheck. But when I imagined myself back in that position, my whole body recoiled. Deep down, I knew that chapter had closed.

Everything I went through, from the losses, endings and massive changes, were not meant to break me. It was setting the stage to propel me into action for the next version of who I am becoming. I wouldn't be here writing this book if not for those experiences. My soul said, "It's time."

When the lure of money tempts me to go backward, I whisper back: "All my needs are met." And when I trust that, I find evidence everywhere. Feathers, for example, show up constantly

for me. They are tiny reminders that I'm on path, and that clarity and peace are already within reach.

I am living the best version of myself, here and now.

Declare it for yourself today. The way forward will reveal itself.

 **Practice:** Can you trust that your soul has an agenda and has prepared the way for you? Can you settle into this awareness with trust?

Invitation 82: Setting Intent

Declare it's going to be a great day and it will be.

It's a beautiful fall day, and I took Zelda on an amazing run. The sunrise, the trees, the birds all felt so joyful that I filmed a short video to capture the moment.

What can you say to start your day in an empowering way?

I've said this before, but it's true: we get to decide what kind of day we have, no matter what's going on around us. The more we practice this, the easier it becomes until one day, it's second nature.

Sometimes the darkness has to get deep enough for us to finally wake up and choose differently. It was time for my life to change. I'm really enjoying my work now and the joy I receive from being there. Sure, there are parts I find annoying, but I don't focus on those. I focus on what lights me up.

Are you also starting to feel excited and curious about what's next? More importantly, are you choosing to live and appreciate each moment, right here and now?

♥ **Practice:** Are there changes you could make today to feel more aligned with who you are? We get attached to our patterns. Today, take action by trying something new.

Invitation 83: Victimhood To Possibility

When challenges show up, choose to ask how they might be guiding your soul's agenda or evolution. This is a Neale phrase I find so helpful! This question shifts you from victimhood to possibility.

I've been asking myself this question often and the answers usually come quickly. Here's one example:

My husband's birthday is coming up, and because I have very limited funds right now, I've had to think outside the box. This year, instead of shopping online and clicking "buy," I'm creating something from the heart. I will leave notes hidden around the house, music from when we first met, a homemade dinner, and I will make his favorite cake. Our anniversary is two days before, so I am combining them into a thoughtful expression of love and gratitude.

It's funny but I haven't done anything creative like this for him in decades. If money weren't tight, I am certain I would have gone online and done a simple click. But now, because I'm intentionally choosing to live as the best version of myself, I see how this "limitation" is actually serving my evolution. It's calling me back to love, creativity, and intimacy—the things that really matter.

My husband has always shown his love in thoughtful ways. For as long as I can remember, he's had a mug of coffee waiting for me when I come home. When we first moved in together thirty years ago, he'd meet me at the subway with a thermos of coffee and a dessert bar. He's been consistent in expressing love. On the other hand, I am realizing how much I've slacked lately and have focused more on what I was getting rather on what I could give. Not always, but it was definitely different when we first met.

What a humbling and beautiful wake-up call. I'm genuinely excited to pour some extra love into his birthday and anniversary this year.

♥ **Practice:** Where in your life can you shift from getting to giving? Remember, what we give freely, we receive tenfold.

Invitation 84: Sacred Body

Treat your body as sacred.

We came here to experience life through our bodies. Today I woke up sluggish, still carrying the remnants of a dream filled with paranoia, judgment, and chaos. There were moments of surrender too, like riding a wave.

It dawned on me that it's day four of giving up corn chips. I don't eat sugar anymore (quit that years ago), but I've always loved to snack. I used to eat nuts, but after a massive kidney stone that required surgery, I switched to chips. When I stop them, I notice withdrawal symptoms.

My point is this: treat your body with care. Don't obsess over it, but **listen** to the messages it gives you.

I have more resources at the end of this book but here are a few practices that have helped me reconnect with my body's wisdom:

Body Scan — Gently bring your awareness to each part of your body. Notice what you feel—sensations, emotions, symbols, or words. Stay there until you feel complete, then move to the next body part. Finish by filling yourself up with love and light.

Kinesiology — This method helps you sense what's right for your body. My first mentor, Maureen Christopher, taught me this decades ago. With one arm extended, she'd place different items in my hand; if my arm weakened, my body didn't need it. If it stayed firm, it did. It was eye-opening! (You can find self-testing versions of this online.)

Tapping (EFT) — A gentle technique for transforming fear or anxiety into peace by stimulating energy points on your body.

Ecstatic Dance — Let your body move freely. Once, when I was struggling to breathe from anxiety, I danced in my garage—wild, unplanned, instinctual—until the energy moved through. Suddenly, I could breathe again.

♥ **Practice:** Choose one activity today to honor your body. How does your body speak to you? What messages has it been trying to send? Treat it like a sacred partner on your soul journey.

Invitation 85: Self Validation

Freedom comes when you no longer need validation to know your worth.

I've often done things for praise. It's how some of us feel noticed, valued, and loved. But I've realized I no longer want to need it.

These days, I'm learning to simply show up, fully and authentically, and then let go of how others receive it. Whether it helps someone or not, it's really none of my business. We do the things we do because they align with who we are—because we want to live with integrity, creativity, and love. So do it with love ... and let go of the rest.

This morning during meditation, I imagined my spiritual guides beside me, holding my hand and reminding me of how loved I am. Imperfect and all, I am enough. Maybe you need that reminder too.

We've all heard the phrase **what others think about us is none of our business** but living it is another story. The truth is, if we base our peace on outcomes or expectations, disappointment will surely follow.

So instead, dream big, live your best life, and let go of what others think. Allow things to unfold as they're meant to. The details will take care of themselves.

True peace doesn't come from control or validation. It comes from within.

 **Practice:** Be your own best friend today. Remind yourself often that you belong here, just as you are.

Invitation 86: Your Best Life

♥ **Start living your best life, and the best version of you, today.**

I was recently reminded that I'm already living my best life. It's not "out there," waiting for some perfect future moment when "fill in the blank" finally happens.

Today, I fill myself with love and gratitude for being healthy and alive. When I began accepting my feelings, and the reality of my life, without resistance, everything started to shift. My emotions were finally able to move through me.

For years, I ran from painful emotions, hiding behind distractions. But pain only grows louder when ignored. True healing began the moment I stopped running and allowed myself to sit with the moment as it was, and feel. From there, I started paying attention to the signs, listening to my intuition, and asking for the right help.

Now, I feel alive, healthy, and whole. Self-love, which includes forgiving ourselves and others, and recognizing that every experience leads to evolution, is key.

Be the love and joy you seek and sit with that. Listen. True freedom comes from remembering that it's never "out there." It's within you, every single time you choose it.

♥ **Practice:** Do you believe you are worthy of living your best life? Creating the best version of you means loving every part of yourself and releasing the stories that no longer belong in your becoming.

Invitation 87: Forgiveness

Forgiveness can begin by writing it all down.

Through three decades of exploring different healing modalities, forgiveness has been a central part of my path. For me, it started with the Big Book step study process through AA. Completing those steps saved my life, but it also triggered obsessions I couldn't easily let go of.

Living with OCD, and “confessing” became a ritual I believed I had to perform or the guilt would eat me up. There are many paths to sobriety; what matters is finding what works for you. AA gave me my foundation, and I'll always be grateful.

Soon after, I discovered the Center for Spiritual Living (then called Religious Science) because I was searching for a positive spiritual community. That experience changed everything and it was the community I was searching for.

Over the years, I've learned countless tools, but writing has consistently brought me the most healing and clarity. Sometimes, writing simply lets emotions come up and out so they can be acknowledged and released. Other times, I've witnessed the mirror at work. Writing unsent letters to people who hurt me allowed me to express everything I held inside but also recognize the ways I've also played similar roles in others' lives. It helped me see with new eyes, and when that happened, forgiveness flowed more easily, both toward them and toward myself.

During the CWG mentor program, we were asked to write apology letters to those we've harmed. I put very little effort in this, thinking, I've already done all of this forgiveness work. But after meditation this morning, I felt called to write to the few people and situations I still carried energy.

Writing it all down brought the closure I didn't know I still needed. Forgiveness is like peeling an onion. Each layer reveals another piece ready to be released. When I finished, I symbolically offered those letters to the earth, trusting the pain would be transformed into something good.

♥ **Practice:** Write a letter to someone you've hurt, or someone who's hurt you. Pour out everything you've carried, and when you're ready, release it to the earth for transformation. Let the weight go.

Invitation 88: Healing Paths

Healing isn't meant to be done alone.

Every situation in your life, especially the painful ones, have been part of your soul's evolution. If you're carrying deep trauma, pain, or anger, I encourage you to reach out for support. Healing isn't meant to be done alone.

As mentioned already, one of the most powerful tools I've used is writing unsent letters to those who caused harm. The first time I ever did this, I remember vividly the moment I saw the mirror at play and how I've done similar things to others. It was a reminder of our oneness and how it can open the door to empathy and forgiveness.

Another practice that has been life-changing for me, and one I've already mentioned, is recapitulation. This is a shamanic process where you revisit a moment of pain as your wiser self and change the story from one of victimization to one of power.

I also experienced profound healing through transformational breath therapy. With the guidance of an experienced facilitator, I was able to release layers of pain, anger, and trapped energy from my body. During one of these sessions, I entered a deep meditative state where I experienced true Oneness with all that is. I finally understood what it means to be pure, unconditional love.

There are many paths to healing. The key is trusting your intuition to lead you to the modality that resonates most deeply. When we allow painful energy to be seen and released, forgiveness follows naturally.

 **Practice:** Find a healing practice or modality that speaks to you. Use it to release the pain and resentment you've been holding. Remember, forgiveness is a gift you give to yourself.

Invitation 89: Prioritize You

When life throws you curve balls, buckle up for the ride of your life.

When we're in pain, grief, or fear, it's hard to see the bigger picture. Yet every painful experience can be a catalyst of deep and lasting change. We are always evolving so embrace the moment as it is and learn to listen within. True acceptance allows the moment to pass while resistance creates more turmoil. Over time, we can shift our mindset from fear to curiosity, and even to excitement.

For most of my life, I ran from my emotions. I feel things so intensely it hurts my heart. But I've learned that the emotions themselves don't break me. It's the distractions I create to avoid them that causes way more pain.

These days, I've found a rhythm that supports me. I start my mornings with a jog, time with my animals, affirmative gratitude and prayer work. Then, in meditation, I choose the state of BEing

I want to embody, such as love, joy, compassion, or prosperity, and I imagine my higher self breathing these energies into my heart. Five to ten minutes is all you need. Writing comes next.

Throughout the day, if I catch myself judging or sinking into a negative thought, I gently replace it with love. I've also realized I'm happiest when I'm helping others. That's how I know I'm on the right path.

One of the clearest signs I am on the right path is feathers. At work, several children have now found feathers and have come up to show them to me without knowing what they symbolize in my life. Their simple gestures remind me that joy is here and I'm exactly where I need to be in my life.

The gratitude I feel daily still amazes me. The more I focus on it, the more it grows. Where are you grateful? How might you build on that?

 **Practice:** Find a daily practice that keeps your body, mind and soul healthy. Choose the practices that are enjoyable to you and realistic. Make **you** a priority. There are resources at the end of the book.

Invitation 90: Relationships

Your joy doesn't depend on anyone else matching your energy.

Just because we feel a certain way does not mean the people around us have to as well. When we are at peace with who we are and how we show up in the world, it becomes easier to allow others to be who they are without needing to change or “fix” them. Everyone has their own soul agenda, so let go and allow them to live their life.

In my relationship, when I feel in sync with life, I often feel frustrated when he doesn't match my energy, as if I'm somehow “better” than him. I can get amnesia and forget the times I came home sharing my own frustrations and dreams. This is a lifelong practice of learning how to truly love another. Nobody can actually take away our joy.

I learned that years ago when the environment at work became so challenging that it felt like certain staff were being squeezed out. I

remember feeling targeted because giving me undesirable tasks seemed more important to him than the job I was hired to do. During one of those tasks, I remember reaching a point of inner joy, noticing the beauty in nature, and declaring, “You can’t take away my joy.” It was the most freeing and empowering feeling. That administrator was only there for one year and was eventually fired.

When we’ve carried patterns for a lifetime, it’s easy to fall back into the old, familiar playbook of blame and victimhood. When we can see the con, we remember to point those fingers right back at ourselves and ask, “How am I living my joy today?”

Let’s live authentically and allow others that same freedom. Our paths will continue to evolve together or not. Either way, it’s all okay. As my friend Kay used to say, “You can’t do it wrong.”

 **Practice:** Do you allow the same freedom in another that you ask for yourself? Offer it today.

Invitation 91: Freedom

You can rewrite your story anytime. Freedom begins within.

When I began this process in July, and chose to show up every day as the best version of me, it wasn't from a place of confidence. It was desperation. I was sick and tired of being sick and tired. Since then, the outer conditions of my life didn't necessarily change drastically but my health and inner world have. By listening to my inner voice, following the joy, and shifting my perspective toward love and gratitude, I discovered a continual peace and freedom unlike anything I'd ever known.

That kind of shift is possible for anyone. If I can do it, anyone can! The path isn't linear, and it's not necessarily easy. But it can be! I used to think this kind of ease was for other people, not me. But day by day, moment by moment, the practice became more natural. Old patterns loosened. Fear lost its grip. The only requirement was a commitment to keep showing up.

I'm curious and excited about what's next and I know I'm on the right path. My body feels amazing and I know it's because I released the anxiety and grief I carried. My emotions still come and go but I no longer fear them. Making peace with my past has created space for something lighter. I don't have all the answers, and maybe you don't either. That's okay. We don't need to know the full story. We only need to keep showing up and choosing our best version again and again. That is where our power lies, in the present moment.

The story isn't over. I don't know exactly where this path leads, but I know what brings me joy right now. And that's enough to keep going. I no longer need to control the narrative.

 **Practice:** Choose your power today.

Invitation 92: Daily Practice

Becoming your best version is a daily choice.

Some days feel easier than other days. Yesterday was one of those days. I spent it sharing thoughtful gifts with my husband, smiling as I spread love notes throughout the house, made dinner, and created a warm space. I'd forgotten how much joy I feel when I express love in this way.

Other days can feel heavier. Maybe we wake up unsettled or out of rhythm. This morning during meditation, I struggled to find my center. So I stayed with it, using my HeartMath emWave device, the one my husband gifted me, to breathe my way back into heart coherence.

Even on our recent date, I caught myself judging him before gently reminding myself to shift back to love, joy, and compassion. That awareness created space for a different experience.

In the CWG mentor program I'm doing, our practice this week was to remember oneness—a truth I've held close for a long time. As Neale said, if we truly lived knowing that “as I do to you, I do to me,” the world would look very different.

Every day we choose how we show up. And some days, it's moment by moment. These practices help me return to center:

1. **Awareness and responsibility** — asking, “What am I creating and why?”

2. **Choosing again** — deciding who I want to be and realigning with that choice.

3. **Smell the flowers, so to speak** — I get outside, snap pictures and notice and appreciate Earth's delights.

♥ **Invitation:** Treat every living thing today as if they were you.

Invitation 93: Awareness

Return to your heart when reactions rise.

When life happens and emotions run high, it helps to pause and notice what's really at play.

Recently, I reacted to Will's reaction to something else going on. After some processing and a little writing, I realized I often accuse him of doing exactly what I'm doing. Writing helps me see those patterns more clearly.

When we can step out of the blame game and simply sit with what's coming up, our perspective changes. I will often ask "What is this about for me?" or "How is this serving me?" Those questions bring me back to my heart.

I've spent years trying to fix things so everyone would be happy. But sometimes the most loving act is to calmly speak our truth and then allow others the space to work through their own

process. We are all connected, after all. Compassion and love help us return to that oneness.

Many of our reactions are old patterns, learned early, replayed unconsciously. Awareness is the first step in deciding whether those patterns still serve us or whether we want to choose differently. I have often said that when I have a reaction, it is an indication I have just found something within that needs attention or healing. When I no longer react, I am free.

Today, my mantra is simple: **Let go and let God.** I'm also letting go of self-doubt. Life's conditions often mirror our evolution, giving us opportunities to grow, again and again.

♥ **Practice:** Take a gentle look at your relationships. Where can you show up with more love and compassion, including for yourself?

Invitation 94: Healthy Boundaries

Let go of doubt and trust yourself. Healthy boundaries are important.

Many of us learned to doubt ourselves early on. Maybe we were constantly questioned or criticized for our choices. Maybe we became experts at reading the room, molding ourselves to please others at the expense of our own truth.

Recently I was trying to please everyone as we planned an event but it didn't seem to work out that way. We can then start second-guessing everything and feel the need to fix things. This doubt creates chaos, confusion, and exhaustion, especially when we're trying to make everyone happy. The truth is, we can't.

What we can do is trust the messages we receive and practice letting go, allowing others their own process. For years, I tried to create peace for everyone around me, only to realize it isn't my job to control events or outcomes. My job is to trust my choices—knowing my intentions came from a good place—and

allow others the same freedom to figure things out for themselves. We can support and have compassion without taking away their freedom to advocate for themselves, thus allowing for empowerment.

It's important to speak our truth, and just as important to give others space to speak theirs. We don't have to take on their energy. We can stand in love and support while trusting them to choose what's right for them.

Learning to trust yourself and your intuition takes practice. When I first took my current job, I felt aligned. But after a couple of weeks, the culture shock and new responsibilities made me question everything. As you know, I almost quit. Instead, I listened within, trusted my guidance, shifted my mindset, and decided to stay. That decision has led to deep joy and connection in my work.

It bears repeating. As my friend Kay used to say, "You can't do it wrong."

♥ **Practice:** What inner messages are you receiving today? Do they come from love? How might your life shift if you released doubt and trusted them fully?

Invitation 95: Empowerment

We've Got the Power.

I have often felt powerless to my emotions, even while teaching empowerment. As the saying goes, we often teach what we most need to learn. Over the last three months, I've discovered that personal power lives in each moment. Each day, I made a conscious choice about how I was going to show up.

Don't get me wrong; there were days I felt like I'd lost the battle. We all have them. In those moments, I would ask myself why these hardships were happening. The answer was simple: to use my experiences to help others. That is my soul's purpose, to help and empower.

Working with children lights me up, and following that joy has reminded me who I am. But joy isn't always automatic. There were times I had to pull myself out of a low place, remind myself of my purpose, and consciously create joy in the moment.

Months ago, when I was in physical pain, I went outside barefoot, stood on the earth, and took pictures of the sky and flowers. The more I said yes to life, the easier it became to live from my heart, trust my intuition, and choose to show up as my best self, one moment at a time.

♥ **Practice:** Are you saying yes to life? If not, what story are you living in? Ask your soul how this moment is serving your soul agenda. Then say yes to life.

Invitation 96: Be the Change

Be the change you wish to see in the world.

Because I know we are all connected by the same stuff, and have chosen to experience the fullness of life, the best way I can support both myself and the planet is to **be the light**.

I feel most free when I let go of the illusion of separation and remember that all life is an expression of God. When I send love and healing to others and to the world, I feel expansive, alive, and free.

When I forget to be conscious and get swept up in stories of drama and division, I feel small and frustrated. I've often encouraged others to use their anger as a force for good. When channeled intentionally, anger can become love in motion. Years ago, I got so angry at what I kept creating that I yelled to the Universe but turned it into a powerful affirmation for the love I had for myself. That choice changed everything.

I remind myself often: **Harm no one.** We are one. As I do unto you, I do unto me.

♥ **Practice:** How can you be a force of love and light for yourself and the world today? Division is only an illusion.

Invitation 97: Authenticity

Be curious about your amazing adventure here on Earth.

Don't forget to pause and breathe.

This morning I jumped right into a creative project but forgot to do my meditation and write. When I remembered, I realized why I felt a bit off. So when I practiced my mindfulness, I shed some tears. I have no idea why, but it doesn't really matter, does it?

I am curious about my path and the surprises that I'm sure will appear. It can be exciting starting a new chapter, especially when we give ourselves permission to be present and feel the emotions that will surely pass through.

We don't have to have it all figured out. All we can do is show up, be honest and share our truth in each moment. That is authenticity.

Maybe you can relate. I have missed so much of actual living because I've spent too much time worrying and stressing about

everything. I continue to work on that by choosing to get back to the present, showing up as love and joy, the feeling states I wish to embody.

I find myself needing others' validation less and less, even though on occasion my feelings will be hurt. In those moments, I listen to myself and talk to myself as if I were nurturing a child.

 **Practice:** Be honest with who you are and share that truth with another. Stand tall and proud, and celebrate your divine uniqueness.

Invitation 98: Show Up Consciously

When things are going great it's easy to slip into old patterns and mind-numbing activities. Stay awake!

When I'm facing hard times, I'm usually motivated to get back into healthy practices. But once life begins to flow again, I sometimes find myself quietly sliding back into old patterns.

The world is both beautiful and overwhelming. We're constantly bombarded with stories, drama, division, and noise. If we're not careful, it can numb or depress us. I've caught myself getting pulled into the drama, forgetting my center. That's when I step back, breathe, and make a conscious choice about how I want to show up and where I want my energy to go.

I don't know about you, but I'm not interested in major wake-up calls anymore, especially the kind that come through physical pain. I'd rather listen for the gentle nudge from within or a tingling in the hand. Maybe that's the new script I'm writing.

We are the storytellers of our lives. Life will keep happening. It's how we respond that shapes our reality.

♥ **Practice:** Maintain a steady practice and schedule. It may help you continue with conscious choices that serve your soul agenda.

Invitation 99: Choose Wisely

I have enjoyed walking with you on this journey called Earth.

I've learned that it's easy to love myself when I'm alone, living in my own rhythm. But being in a relationship has a way of holding up a mirror. It shows us what we most need to see about ourselves: how we love, where we judge and how willing we are to grow.

Thirty years ago, I thought I loved myself just fine after doing so much work on myself—until I met Will. That's when I realized how much I judged myself, how hard it was to receive love, how often I needed outside validation, and how much I expected others to give me what I didn't yet know how to give myself.

Our relationship has been far from perfect. We've both hurt each other. We've had to forgive, again and again. But through all the pain and challenges, we kept choosing love. Sometimes love means taking a stand. Sometimes it means walking away for a

moment. Sometimes it means crucial conversations. It always means growth.

We get to choose how we spend our time and with whom. Whether alone, with friends, coworkers or partnerships, we always have a choice with how we can show up as the best version of ourselves. My relationship has been one of my greatest teachers and instrumental in the growth of my soul. I am learning how to really love.

Choose wisely.

 **Practice:** Who do you surround yourself with? Do these relationships support the person you are becoming?

Invitation 100: Love

Love is the thread that binds us.

I want to close this book with a deeply personal story.

When Will and I were in the beginning of our relationship, we unexpectedly got pregnant. Our birth control hadn't worked. I'll spare you the details of the whirlwind of emotions that followed, but I remember feeling that I was on my own. Will had expressed he wasn't ready to be a father and nobody else was offering to help, so I took him and everyone out of the equation as I sat with my decision. Emotions were very intense, upsetting and high for us both. One night I was crying hysterically because I felt I was in a no-win situation.

On the one hand I couldn't end it; on the other, I felt such dread and doom because staying home with my baby was of utmost importance to me based on my own trauma.

So in the midst of heavy tears, suddenly I heard four fateful words: *I will be back.*

I immediately stopped crying and looked around, startled by the words and how clear they were. After sitting in stunned silence, what came next changed everything.

The peace and calm that washed over me filled me with such serenity and hope. Love and compassion filled my being and, at that moment, I knew what I needed to do. I made my choice.

Years later, when we were both ready to have a child, I was lying on the floor during nap time at the preschool where I worked.

Again, out of nowhere, I heard another clear and gentle voice: *You have just conceived.* I sat straight up and looked around, floored. That week, I learned I was pregnant. The soul, my son, had returned.

I feel called to share this story because so many people believe they know what's best for others. But we each have our own soul agenda. We make decisions based on all of the information we have at the time. We learn, we grow, we evolve. When we revisit

our choices with compassion, we can often see that our intentions were pure and we did the best we could at the time.

Be gentle with yourself. Offer the same grace to others. We have not walked in their shoes. Division is an illusion. Love is the thread that binds us.

Relish in this gift called life.

♥ **Practice:** What step will you take today to create the best version of you?

Afterward

I am excited about the road ahead, the tribe I am sure to meet, and the various ways my creativity and helpfulness appear. If a victim mentality sneaks in, I notice it and say, "Yeah, that's my old story... no thanks." I then replace it with a feeling of empowerment and self-worth that nothing can take away.

Once you experience your wholeness, it is always present, and you can shift into that state of **BEing** at any time. It is your essence.

I am clear about who I am. I hold the vision and show up every day. I let go of how it will all transpire and trust the process of my life. I am choosing to live my best life as the best version of myself.

After years of encouragement from others and a strong inner nudge to get myself out there, I recently hosted a wonderful workshop, *Authentic Living: A Heart-Centered Reset*. It felt as if a weight had been lifted off my shoulders; I am ready and excited.

I truly feel the stars have aligned.

My guide is perched on my shoulder, reminding me that all is well. Some time ago, through the tears, my higher self whispered, "It's all okay. Everything is okay." I felt that deeply.

It has been a pleasure walking with you on this journey. May you be guided by love, one day at a time. May you create the best version of yourself today and every day

 **Remember, most of all, your best will change day-to-day. Make peace with yourself and what is. This present moment is all we have.**

The Daily Connection

Over the years, these are some strategies that helped me stay grounded, recharged, and whole. Don't try to do them all. Find the one that speaks to your soul today and commit to it.

Please listen to your body and move at a pace that feels safe for you.

1. Movement Meditation

Yoga, walking, gardening, Qi Gong, or ecstatic dance.

The idea: Let your body guide you, without judgment, and stay present in motion.

2. Mindfulness Practices

- **Grounding:** Stand barefoot on the earth. Imagine light coming down through your body, through your feet, and deep into the earth. Feel your roots spreading.
- **5 Senses Activity:** Notice 5 things you see, 4 you hear, 3 you touch, 2 you smell, and 1 you taste.

- **Nature Journaling:** Spend quiet time outdoors and write about what you notice. Utilize all of your senses.
- **Morning Messenger:** A practice shared by Gerry C. Starnes of *Spirit Paths*. Ask nature for a sign, then pay attention to what catches your eye or what nature shows you. Journal your findings.

3. Mantra & Sound Meditation

- **Mantra:** Repeat a calming word, phrase, or sound for 10–20 minutes. Create your own or try: “I am safe. I am loved. I am whole.”
- **Listen:** Find a guided meditation that takes you on a journey of healing or discovery via the podcast by Kim Hiles.

4. Heart Coherence for Emotional Balance

- **Quick Coherence® Technique:** Using heart-centered breathing, recall a positive feeling, memory, appreciation, or something that makes you smile. Breathe that feeling into your heart. (Learn more at heartmath.org).
- **Embodiment:** Choose a state of **BEing** (love, joy, security, freedom, creativity, prosperity, etc.) and breathe that feeling-state into your heart. Try imagining your

Highest Self in front of you, blowing this state of being into your heart.

5. Manifestation & Gratitude

- **Visualize:** Focus on your desired outcome with full emotion. Give thanks in advance, as if what you desire already exists.
- **Redirect:** Turn difficult emotions like anger into empowered declarations. Affirm: "I am thankful for ____" or "I am deserving of ____."
- **Expand:** Send love to yourself, others, or the world. Focus on gratitude for all you have.

6. Breathwork Techniques

- **4-4-4-4 Breathing (Box Breathing):** Inhale for 4, hold for 4, exhale for 4, hold for 4. Repeat 4 times.
- **4-7-8 Breathing:** Inhale for 4, hold for 7, exhale for 8.

7. Energy Clearing

- **Cutting Cords:** Visualize a cord between you and another. Cut the cord and release them with love. This can be done whether you want them in your life or not.

- **Protective Shield:** Surround yourself in a bubble of light; only love enters and exits.

8. Body Scan for Healing

Lie still and move your attention through each body part. Listen and notice sensations or emotions you may feel. When complete, move to the next body part. When you are done, affirm your new truth: “I am strong. I am whole. I am worthy. I am love.”

9. Mind Scan for Empowerment

Scan your mind and write down your thoughts. Are they distorted? If so, write down new statements that reflect your truth.

10. Recapitulation Process

The Recapitulation Process is a powerful shamanic practice I learned from Gerry C. Starnes through *Spirit Paths: The Quest for Authenticity*. This work has been deeply transformative in my own healing journey, and I’m grateful to share it with permission.

If you’d like to experience this practice in a guided format, I offer an audio version in my online course, *Authentic Living*.

Continue the Journey

Ready to embody the best version of you?

Explore my signature course, **Authentic Living**, along with workshops, guided journeys, and **free resources** to support your path at:

kimhiles.com

About the Author

Kim Hiles is an author and educator whose work centers on awareness, authentic living, and personal transformation. Over more than three decades she has supported both children and adults in developing emotional awareness, connection, and the courage to grow through life's challenges.

She is the author of seven books exploring healing, self-discovery, and personal growth. Her work has also expanded through workshops, courses, and creative projects designed to help people live more consciously and authentically.

Learn more and connect with Kim at kimhiles.com

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