

build a personal daily practice...

the daily dose

Lori Kamer



Honouring the Land & Territories of all of Turtle Island

This manual was created on what is known today as the Halton region; comprised of treaty 22, & 13A, traditionally Indigenous territories of Anishinabewaki ᐋᓂᔑᓈᐯᒧᐎᓐ, Atti wonderonk (Neutral), & Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation. These lands surrounding the great lakes are steeped in Indigenous history and as a settlers we acknowledge the necessity of learning the true history & believe in the follow through of reparations. In honour and respect for indigenous people, past, present & future, and this place we call home, we are committed to a path of change & reconciliation.

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Please be advised & read carefully...

CAUTION to be considered: Engaging in Breath Practices alters the internal chemistry, affects the nervous system & has impacts physiologically, physically, mentally & emotionally. Much of these can be beneficial when practiced appropriately however one is to always proceed with caution because there is also potential risk among breathing strategies. Especially in regard to practices that involve hyperventilation & hypoventilation.

All of the information provided throughout manuals & within the instruction material (videos, sessions & the like) are theoretical & **not intended to be taken as an authority on medical advice**. Therefore **they are not a substitute for medical care**. Clients are advised to seek advice from their medical professionals before engaging in these practices.

Risks of involvement: breathwork & pranayama (*yogic practices of breath*) are associated with contraindications and risk. Participants must be of sound mind and understand the risks involved in participating. Some potential risks include discomfort during and/or after sessions; which may include but are not limited to numbness or tingling, dizziness or fainting, significant emotional reactions or distress such as temporarily induced feelings of anxiety or depression, or an array of possibilities like sadness, sometimes resulting in a flooding of tears or a burst of intense rage or a rush of euphoria. Some other side effects include potential headache, feeling lethargic & or a sensory experience of floating, abdominal upset & or nausea, having increased volume & frequency of elimination, dry mouth & throat, shaking and/or tightening sensations of muscles or joints. All of which are considered normal responses to the techniques guided within sessions.

During your practice you are in charge of using your judgment of what is best for you and your health. You are free to modify or refrain from any practice at any time. **Please note that you are responsible for your own health & well-being and the risks associated with these practices.** You must use your own discretion when it comes to participation in them. ☆Many of the practices included have **sacredly been passed down** through the ages from teacher to student; **please handle this information with care and honour the traditions.**

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First of all, I want acknowledge your for taking time to dive into gentle practices of self care. It is my hope to inspire & motivate you on a journey to **finding practices that not only bring with them a sense of peace & contentment BUT are also attainable.** In order to maintain consistency, the ease of which they can fit into daily routines will be one of the biggest indicators of whether they can be implemented more regularly. The aspiration is that with feeling the immense benefits of these practices that they will naturally become a part of daily routines.

Therefore **your practice needs to be something that you can personally maintain considering your individual needs & time constraints.** Which means getting creative with your time in the ultimate goal that eventually they become an essential point of daily connection. Concrete practices that help you check in, ground, and move forward with the intention of being guided from compassionate regard for self & others. **Because engaging in practices like meditation & self awareness not only is there benefit to ourselves but it extends out to the world around us.** When consciously self observant & intentionally tuned into the external environment one can let that be their guiding force. This might look like taking rest when the body is tired or intuiting that a friend might rather a quiet presence over unsolicited advice, etc. **It is acknowledging that life is filled with complexities; that there will always be times of misstep.** But intentional awareness provides more opportunity to consistently check in & to then move with the confidence that you are doing everything to the best of your ability in each moment.

This mindful awareness is especially important within current realities; we are consistently bombarded with unrelenting stresses of modern times in an increasingly chaotic and unfair world. It can be very challenging to find internal calm. It can be easy to lose hope. These practices do not solve all the problems BUT they can help bring clarity & remind us of our inherent resiliency. **Right now, we are being asked to show up for each other and for this planet; to live with unwavering compassion for ourselves and others while forging the way on this path that can be quite daunting at times yet is also incredibly beautiful at its core.**

★with the utmost sincerity, I am here for support if needed; as a community we need to hold each other up. Connect with me via email & I will do my best to assist you, if I am unable I can lead you in a direction of someone who can.

REMEMBER to **work at your own pace, this is your personal practice**, moving forward with compassion is the most important aspect of building daily habits.

What is a 'daily practice'?

As a collective there are several routines people typically do every single day such as...

- bathing
- brushing teeth
- drinking coffee/tea
- checking up on the latest with social media, the news

These are things are done without necessarily contemplating them. **The dailiness of them turns them into habits; "an acquired behaviour pattern regularly followed until it has become almost involuntary"** (as defined by [dictionary.com](https://www.dictionary.com).)

However, it's also important to note that not all habits engagd in are created equal, some offer decreased benefits, even potentially detrimental to well-being while others may be more neutral. For instance, consider what you drink with meals. Do you drink a large volume with food? What do you drink? How does it make you feel? Where and when did these habits begin? Is it something that has been passed down through generations? Was there a tradition? Is there reasoning behind the tradition? Does it still make sense after all these years? Does it apply to your life now?

When it comes down to it the thing to really consider is the whys of it all. There is such a tendency to simply fall into pattern because we have never questioned why we do the things we do. There is a famous quote for a reason, if it isn't broken you do not need to fix it. BUT what if there is a better way? OR what if the way you are doing something isn't actually working but its impossible to discern while continuing to do it. To use the prior example, drinking fluids with foods has a lot of discourse around it, depending on specifics there is much debate about the wether the accompanying can be a benefit of not to digestion. So how does it feel in your body? *REMEMBERING that we are ALWAYS CHANGING so we need to keep on looking inward and re-evaluating.

Its also important to acknowledge that we live in a world with a multitude of understandings & perceptions. It can be dizzying trying to figure it all out. (Of course there are hard lines between right & wrong in many circumstances; engaging in mindful practices is not meant to be used as a shield to perpetuate harm or bypass reality). Therefore, it must not be forgotten that the main intention of these practices is connection. To look inward. To get to know yourself on the deepest levels. To figure out what drives you. To understand your mechanisms to the best of your ability. To tune into what brings joy & pleasure as well as pain & sorrow. To acknowledge that we are always changing and that what we liked yesterday may not be the same as what we like tomorrow. To stop giving morality to things that were not designed for judgement such as food & emotions. To accept that we deserve love & kindness no matter how "bad" we think we are.

Tuning into self opens a doorway to a kind of self reflection that can soften all the noise. The reality is that there may be science both for & against water with meals. But what does your body say? In a world full of counter arguments and contradicting polarities, what is best for you personally...

Typically we are taught to do what we have been asked to do or we learn through mirroring what we ourselves have experienced instead of checking in with ourselves to see what actually fits. (Once again, there are hard & fast rules related to humanity that we absolutely need to abide by when it comes to the safety of ourselves and others). However there are a lot of aspects that could perhaps benefit from a re-evaluation rooted in what is best for ourselves as unique individuals. Therefore, **these pages provide some guidance provide an invitation to take some time to consider some of your personal habits & subconscious drives.**

The objective is to remain in conscious contemplation. Why do you do the things you do? Are these rituals, behaviours, thought patterns helpful or restrictive? **It is ESSENTIAL to do this from a place of non-judgment. The sole purpose in simply to be the quiet observer; to respectfully bear witness & learn.** To lean into it all, the discomforts, the pleasantries and the in between.

Because the more you can discover the more likely you will be able to intuit what you need in each moment.

We are living in unparalleled times with economic uncertainties, skyrocketing inflation, inequitable structures, etc. All while also managing the reality of raging wars, and the unrelenting threat of virus' & climate collapse. As mentioned, it can all be almost paralyzing to sit with but turning away from these tough realities does not change circumstances. We need to learn how to find more comfort sitting with the uncomfortable while finding hope that it can be different. In the words of Angela Davis **"You have to act as if it were possible to radically transform the world. And you have to do it all the time".**

Now is a time where we get to step up & challenge the status quo. A time where we can really start to ask the hard questions and deliberate on every minute detail. A time where we can slowly start to make the small shifts that will help to make this world a better place for all of us.

With all that in mind, the first logical step begins with **getting quiet enough to be able to listen.** To look inward to figure out what makes you tick. To notice what your driving forces are. To make conscious what brings you peace & personal fulfillment in life. This will look different for each and every one of us. So what is it for you?

In this way your practices stand as a jumping off point so that you can more consciously select the thought patterns, behaviours & rituals that fit best for you personally. Therefore, as you develop your routines, **the goal is to establish ways in which these mindful daily practices can be incorporated for general wellbeing. AND a great opportunity to take a closer look at all aspects of your life with an open mind and the potential of change.** It is as simple as setting an intention to implement attainable practical steps that can in turn help you to live your life with more respect and appreciation for yourself and your process.

Its important to note that while I often mention taking action steps for the betterment of us all globally I also understand that we all have our way of contributing. We are not all born with the drive to be activists and so you may not be called to be out on the streets taking an active role. HOWEVER I do believe that as a collective we are being asked to look within ourselves to birth a new world that is fair and just for every single human. AND in order to change the world we must first start with ourselves to let it branch outwards. WITHOUT side stepping reality nor dousing existence in an unrealistic sheen of positivity. Real life does not work this way. We cannot escape pain or sadness. We need to feel the harsh nip of sacred anger. No amount of toxic positivity or spiritual bypassing will protect anyone from the sometimes cruel bite of human existence. Better to face it as it comes!

As you embark on building your own personal daily practices, whether a beginner or a seasoned practitioner, allow yourself to get curious, get creative and open yourself up to new possibilities. There is no right or wrong way to do this! It is called practice for a reason!!

The coming pages provide some general guidelines and suggestions of options to implement into a uniquely suited mindful daily practice...



Building mindful daily practice general concepts...

**PLEASE NOTE: emotional responses can occur with ANY breathing practice, meditative states, intentioned reflections. BE GENTLE with yourself AND be aware that practices with Breath can also be quite “awakening”. If you ever feel unsafe, stop, open your eyes & work to get grounded in the present. A good tool is to focus on the any of the five senses to orient yourself.*

Do your best to engage in these practices in a **SAFE** space.

Props like pillows and blankets are helpful to create comfortable environment. If you wish, add personal items of significance to set the tone; familiar pleasant scents, a reflection notebook, sacred objects, etc.

On top of your mindful practices, also consider other helpful habits...

- drink plenty of water
- eat foods that nourish you
- make an effort to get adequate sleep

★**PRO TIP:** take advantage of accountability tools
ie., HABITBULL (*an app to stay on top of habits*)

★**MAKE TIME FOR YOUR PRACTICES** (*perhaps block out specific slots in your calendar*)

A great foundation for a daily practice involves 4 elements to guide you...

meditation; including any practice with a focused mind (*seated meditation, standing meditation, walking meditation, creating, dancing, etc.*)

breath; our most vital function. We need to breathe well to live well. Breath will be at the centre of every practice. A focused practice includes intentioned breath with awareness and self-control.

movement; including any movement based practice (*yoga, tai chi, Qi gong, running, walking, dancing, mobility exercises, stretching, weight lifting, etc.*)

intention; getting clear & focused and letting it be a source of guidance as you move forward.

(This might involve internal declarations, general mindset, journaling, reflection, affirmations, mind mapping, visualizing etc.)

An example of a practice...

- 10-20 mins of movement
- 5-10 mins of conscious intentional breathing
- 5-20 min of meditation (*there are innumerable apps with guided meditations, i.e., Insight Timer*)
- a quick intention setting (*journaling, reflecting, gratitude practices*); set a tone for your day

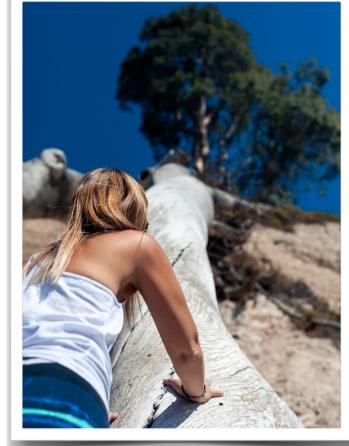
**In no particular order; figure out what works best for you & give permission for it be fluid. It is okay if it changes from day to day.*

★Keep in mind that any practice involving conscious breath is best with movement & grounding first in preparation and ease of function. (*It is like gentle mobility exercises to warm up the joints before a vigorous run*).

Other elements to consider in a daily practice... **“physicality & grounding”**

With any mindful practice it is essential to begin from a place of establishing a foundation from which to build upon; literally and figuratively. **The first step is always getting ‘grounded’.**

To be GROUNDED means... different things to each & every one of us. The general concept is that we want to be able to feel our bodies and where we are in space. A natural response to the challenges of life can easily lead toward more disembodied existences. However, if we are not fully embodied in the physical qualities of life, how could we possibly be as present to the needs of ourselves and others. Therefore, **being grounded means being present and aware with intentional focus.**



Thus **anchoring in the physical realm; the physical body, the physical earth & more specifically the FEET.** Metaphorically the feet are what connects us to the surface of the earth, they are the foundation from which we stand. **Keep in mind that disembodiment or dissociation can be a protective barrier that serves a significant purpose. If body based practices are triggering, another entry point might be a better option until a sense of safety can be obtained.*

Start slow... it is encouraged to pay attention to your feet and your hands when you can remember. Notice how they feel when they interact with the environment. Can you tune into different textures, temperatures, etc. What feels pleasant to the touch. Can you feel the support of the earth under your feet?

And then turn your attention to the physical form in general. What does it feel like to have a body? How does your physical body move on a moment to moment basis? What do you notice in the movement of other bodies? How are each of us similar yet unique? How could you move in a way that best serves your body? How can you treat your body with more love & compassion?

Further still, what about the environment surrounding you and the physical nature of the earth? Can you be more aware of all physicality; the structures we spend time in, the nature outdoors. How do these elements enhance or detract from your experiences?

Get outside as much as you can (spend time surrounded by trees, go for walks or a hike, lie on the grass or in the snow). A great exercise is to stand with your bare feet on the earth **AND just simply, FEEL, WITNESS & LISTEN.**

Be aware of the sensations that come up in your body, while both in your practices, and throughout your day. Allow yourself to sit with them as they arise, even potentially learning the art of welcoming them all. Remembering that it is **CRUCIAL to be gentle with yourself.** This does not have to happen in a day or a week. ***It takes time & patience. Please be kind to yourself; self compassion is the number one objective.***

ALWAYS practice in a way that will lead toward your unique understanding of success. For example, when seated in a meditation, you can prop yourself with cushions, sit against the wall, sit in a chair, even lie down if you need to. **Keep in mind that the more comfortable you are, the more likely you will fall asleep. BUT this is also okay! If you fall asleep its an indication that your body or mind needs rest. It is just another part of the process of listening to the body and following through with what is indicated.*

Getting started...

Included is an assortment of breath focused practices that can be incorporated into your daily regimen. (All of which may serve a purpose in your life as they have for many others but as mentioned it is important to tap in & discover what works best for you personally). AND before diving into more rigorous breath, it is nice to prepare the body & lungs. Here are some **How To's** for finding the 3 parts of the breathing. *Please practice with consideration of the cautions along with permission from physicians or care providers.*

How to do Nasal Unblocking Video

→ Generally safe for everyone

(during pregnancy limit it to only a few) *can help with a stuffy nose before practice.

How to do Cleansing Breaths Video

→ SAFE for everyone (including pregnancy)

How to do Abdominal Breathing Video

CAUTION: This Practice can exacerbate or cause even anxiety, especially when the diaphragm is not functioning optimally. Best to gently accustom oneself to it when in a state of calm. Once this practice is embedded it can be incredibly calming in times of increased stress.

How to do Mid Chest Breathing Video

CAUTION: Be aware of any injury to the ribs, spinal bones or musculoskeletal system that might make this breath more challenging or aggravate inflamed tissues. Also be careful & use discretion with pregnancy, high blood pressure, recent heart attack or risk due to heart related considerations. **If there is any concern, opt for slow & gentle.**

How to do Upper Chest Breathing Video

CAUTION: Can get light headed & feel spacey quite easily. Be conscious of surroundings & get up slowly from breath practices that might make you feel dizzy.

How to do the Full Yogic Breath Video

→ This breath is SAFE for everyone & is

foundational for breath practices. However, it is also a **practice** to improve breathing apparatus function while also having the ability to calm the nervous system. It's important to note however that **optimal natural breath engages the diaphragm but it is quiet & gentle with only slight movements** unlike the fullness of this particular style of breathing.

How to do Breath Retentions on the Inhale Video

→ this breath comes major **CAUTIONs...**

- TAKE extreme CAUTION while Pregnant (**NEVER** hold for more than a few seconds)
- EXERCISE CAUTION with Mental Illness (*can be helpful for anxiety & depression however it excites the fight, flight, freeze, flop response so it can also be agitating & or stress inducing*). **It is NEVER to be practiced during episodes of Mania or Psychosis**
- practice with caution if EPILEPTIC (*breath retentions come with risk, best to be careful*)

★ALWAYS PRACTICE SAFELY!! Practice breath retentions in a **safe space** (ie. pillows all around) in case you were to feel faint & or fall over.

Because tuning into physicality is also an exploration of conscious breath, meditation, movement & intention. Breath can be used as an anchor point if its comfortable. **★But if breath stirs discomfort, use other senses; bring awareness to scent, an object in your hand, focusing on what you see, taste, etc.**

Practice tips: When bringing in a daily practices **it is recommended to find a time of day that can fit your practice at the same general time every day.** (*The more consistent it is the easier it is to maintain*). It is helpful to do it first thing upon awakening with time to spare before beginning your day. Or at night before bed. If neither work, find any time that it fits! Even if its just a couple minutes here & there between tasks or caring for children. **The timeline suggested is 5-10 minutes of movement, 5-10 minutes of conscious breathing, 5-10 mins of meditation, and some time in reflection.** Remember, you chose the order. Find your rhythm & your flow. This is a time to figure out what works best for you! **To get you started, click on the link below for a mindful practice.**

Module 1 Practice (use this video as much as needed or get creative yourself)

**It might take some time, patience & courage to get into a regular practice. This is VERY NORMAL. It is not a linear path. Some days are easier than others. There will be ebbs & flows in the days and years to come. Remember that you are never moving backwards.*

**If you are ever feeling sensitive or overwhelmed you are welcome to skip them. Please seek professional support if you find yourself unable to connect to your coping skills. I can recommend free or low cost options. If you live in Ontario here is a great resource for mental health support... [Mind Beacon](#)*

Other elements to consider in a daily practice... **“emotionality”**

Building upon the foundations of physicality; once grounded there is opportunity to dive a little deeper into the pools of emotion.

Thus **turning focus onto the emotional realm; the emotional body, the element water, the way that we flow through life, how we interact with the world, our social relationships & how we actively create.**



Start slow... it is encouraged to pay attention to water as much as you can. Notice what it feels like to interact with the water element, when you bathe, swim, drink water, etc. How does it feel to be immersed in water, how does it feel to drink water? Are you actively in gratitude for water? Can you be in constant appreciation for it as a resource. How does water nourish you? Cleanse you?

Water is a conduit for emotionality because we are made up of mostly water & water in its very nature is receptive. Which means that water has the ability to take in or mould to its surroundings. It also changes properties; it can be overflowing or evaporate completely. Therefore we take in our environments in a similar way that water will adapt to its environment and its containing source.

This is akin to the emotional body. **We are naturally highly sensitive beings; receptive in nature, just like water. We too are very much affected by our environment.** AND just like water, there is an inherent strength in us yet there is also sensitivity to the natural changes in fluctuations; the states of the changing tides of existence.

Therefore it can be rather insightful to connect with how the emotions move through the body. See if you can allow yourself to be present to your emotions with open arms. Consider how you might interweave the physical & the emotional energies together; both earth & water (earth; *like humans is mostly water - each element essential in its nature*). **How can you learn from both the physical & emotional bodies?**

So **spend time interacting with water**. Submerge yourself in water if you can; swim, have a bath. Pay attention to the water as you shower. **Listen to the sounds of water and the sensation of it on your skin. Notice how it makes you feel.**

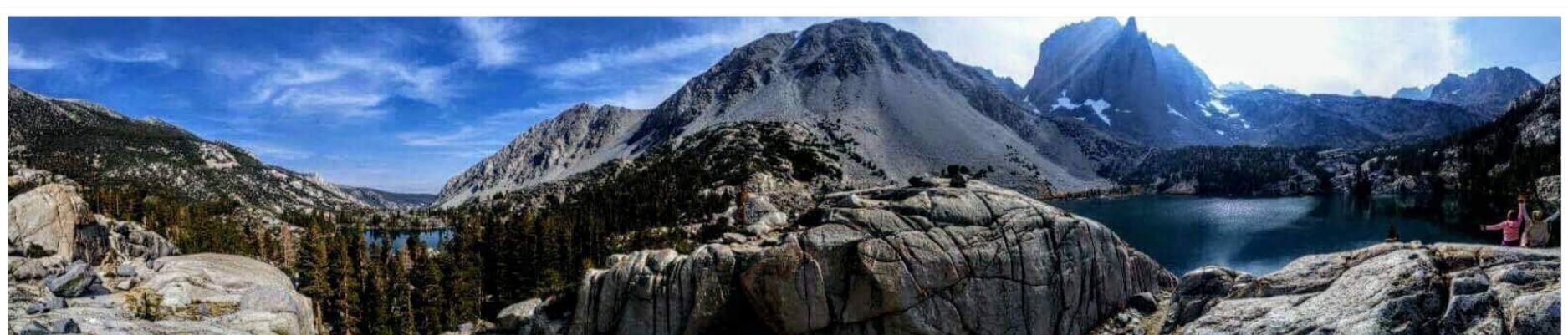
According to some philosophies, water is thought to be energetically connected to the subconscious realms; akin to the mysteries hidden under the surface of the water. So it can be imagined that these practices help to explore the unknown recesses of the mind; to the subconscious ideologies and learnt patterns within. **The intention is to allow yourself to be in conscious awareness of your internal workings through honest reflection.**

To do this, it is imperative to be aware of the emotions that arise & fall in your body like the waves of the ocean (*in your practices, throughout your day AND in your sleep*). While at the same time **allowing yourself to be with every feeling as fully and completely as you can muster**. The practice is to work on **observing them without attachment, learning to welcome them ALL in a warm embrace**. In this excavation there might even be messages that arrive along side the emotions (*writing can be a great aid in arousing some of the deeper reflections and pondering*). **A lot can be uncovered simply by quieting the noise long enough to listen.**

Therefore mindful practices are a great source for opening up those passageways and allowing the flood gates to open metaphorically speaking. **It is also a great opportunity to pay attention to water intake.** Are you drinking enough water? *★Keep in mind that a sufficient amount of water consumption is one of the most important pillars of health. Let your body guide your awareness but 2-3 litres is a typical goal to strive for. AND don't forget electrolytes (sodium, potassium, calcium, chloride, phosphate & bicarbonate are also essential).*

This is also a time to get CREATIVE! From a yogic perspective, water is connected to the energy of the pelvic region which is associated with creativity. So **MOVE your body in creative ways.** Move your hips. DANCE!! Create art with your body, with your hands, with your mind etc. **Get into a flow & let it carry you.** Contemplate how you can be part of actively creating in your life.

AND **pay attention to your dreams** if accessible to mind. *Our dreams are a way point to the subconscious underpinnings; a viewpoint into our internal workings. Messages from dreams can be a source of information otherwise hidden and further guide or direct us.* If your dreams are not as available, it is possible to train yourself to be more conscious of your dreams. One trick is to go to sleep with intention to recall your dreams. Upon waking, before you even open your eyes, spend a few minutes reaching into your thoughts to see if any remembering's surface. If time permits, open your eyes and write as much as you can recall. The more you do it the more you will remember! *An added bonus point of reflection and another way to get to know yourself on a deeper level.*



Other elements to consider in a daily practice... “mentality”

In a continuum of the same manner, building upon the foundation of ushering in a sense of stability through connection to the earth and the physical body. As well as working to establish an appreciation for the full spectrum of human emotion, through gaining access to subconscious world and connecting to the majesty of water. The next phase turns to the thoughts and their impact on every aspect of life.



Thus **adding in conscious awareness of the mental world; the thinking mind, associated with the element of air. Specifically its about becoming more cognizant of how you show up in the world. How thoughts are essential in making up our reality.**

Start slow... it is encouraged to pay attention to ‘air’ as well as any presence of wind while outside. Notice the sensations associated with air both perceptible & imperceptible; how it touches your skin & hair, how it makes you feel, how you interact with the air you breathe etc. Tune into the mysterious nature of being engulfed in an element you cannot see and only feel in certain scenarios. How often do you think about breathing? Do you ever ponder the elements that make life possible like oxygen, carbon dioxide, nitrogen, etc.? Do you take air for granted? **Are you ever actively in gratitude for the oxygen you breathe?** Can you be in constant appreciation for it as a resource. How does the air nourish you?

According to some philosophies, **the element air is energetically connected to the mental realms; like clouds moving through the open expanse of the sky. Akin to air, thought cannot be seen but it does not negate its power & strength.** Furthermore, the nature of air has a tendency toward **unpredictability.** Patterns can be speculated but still destructive forces can sometimes sweep in unexpectedly leaving **significant change in its wake.** A power & resistance that is awe inspiring.

Therefore consider how these same attributes arise within you, **understanding that internal havoc is almost inevitable at times but what comes in its wake is change & growth.** All integral components of life. Hence, this is where the thoughts come in. How often do you pay close attention to your thoughts? Our thoughts can be ascribed as comparable to a propulsive force that drives us forward.

It can be argued on some level that what we think we create. **Keep in mind that this concept can be weaponized. Honestly I once clung to the sentiment that our thoughts create our reality; that we are our thoughts. I wanted to believe that if I could just change my thoughts, I could change my life. While there is some truth to this, it also neglects the unfortunate realities of privilege versus oppression; that much of the world is lacking in equal opportunities & access. Along with the long list of disparities in peoples experiences from tragedies to illness. There was a time when I thought I could change my chronic illness but I have now come to a new discovery that magical thinking can only get me so far.*

Its true that humans cannot change certain realities and that many things are beyond control BUT there is an ability to choose HOW to experience life's circumstances. It is instinctual to be at the whim of our thoughts, to get engrossed in tales. Thoughts have power. With thinking comes the gift of discernment & the capacity to direct its course.

The best way to enhance these qualities is to shine a light on mental activity. To affect the thoughts one must first become aware of the intricacies of how they operate. **Because similar to subconscious emotionality, thinking patterns are often beyond conscious recognition.**

Realistically, a substantial portion of concepts and perspectives are programmed within the first several years of life; resulting in a theory that behavioural tendencies are rooted in the subconscious. A difficult force to contend with when recognizing that the determining factors for how we interact with the world is largely primed by our earliest experiences. We are often unaware of the source because we are so heavily influenced by our environments and all that it entails. It is impossible to not be affected by our society in general; capitalism, colonialism, media, education, culture, heritage, etc. All of these aspects come together to fasten internal biases & limited beliefs that are further cemented through confirmation bias. Which is the **tendency to look for & interpret info based on what we already believe.**

Without excavation & conscious review these beliefs are given reigns to continue unchecked whether true or not. So the practice is in making conscious the unconscious and beginning a query into deeper self reflection. To do this, become present to your thoughts on every level. **To be witness to mental structures.** It can be helpful to imagine being on the outside, curiously observing from a distance. *Note how it is possible for there to be a layering effect of multiple internal dialogues.* **Its easy to fall subject to the narratives but do your best to not get sucked in. Practice non judgement; just witness. Become aware of the quality & the content.** Compleutive practices like meditation provide the perfect environment not only to observe but also to interrogate the underpinnings of thought processes. An illuminating approach that can gauge whether thoughts tend to be more self sustaining or self sabotaging. So that when undesirable or harmful patterns are uncovered, **opportunities arise to work collaboratively with these inborn narratives through the functioning of higher executive regions.** Simply put, we have the ability to alter how we relate to our stories; we can take on different perspectives. We are not destined to think the same way forever. It is possible to change our conditioned programs that get in our way.

For reference, it is important to consider that many common thought pattern oscillate at them helm of contradiction. Therefore, it can get a little confusing because it is possible to believe two competing storylines at once. A good example is being convinced that you are both too much and not enough at the same time. In truth, life is complicated; **humans are a complex network of intricately woven parts that don't always make sense.** It is possible to have mixed emotions; everything comes in layers. Everything is relative to its parts. So the question lies in determining why there is so much focus on either or scenarios. It doesn't always have to look that way; not everything needs a label. As humans, are naturally hungry for definitive answers. It is actually hardwired in; our brains like everything to be neat and orderly, fitting perfectly into boxes. But unfortunately for us, life doesn't actually work like this. Life is messy AND it is also exhilarating. **If we can learn to let go of absolutes, if we can loosen our grip on what we think we know we can create space for alternate perspectives.** In a sense we can set ourselves free of the shackles of our minds comfortable limitations.

So the trick is in learning to relate to yourself on a different level. What could be possible if you were not held back by the constraints of your mind? Imagine that it is conceivable to recognize the voices in your head as opinions & not certainties. Instead of believing in the narrow confines of specific characterizations, there is an option to observe the self as multiple working parts; all parts necessary for the whole. Like an orchestra; there can be solos but it is the harmony of it all coming together that dazzles. You get to be the conductor that takes charge of the production. There will be times where a part of us wants to steal the show but it is also possible to commune and find compromise. In time with these subtle shifts in awareness more space is created for alternate perspectives. It allows room for new learning & growth. It begins inside you!

Give yourself permission to be kinder to yourself and to unlearn the shortcomings that box you into believing things like not being enough. **Your worth need not be analyzed, justified or verifiable.** You are enough as you are.

Therefore, on some level, **becoming aware thinking patterns means chooses to accept or deny the narrative.** However, *keep in mind, we are evolving beings so it is best to remain flexible because things change and so do our perspectives.* The objective is to solely focus on the here & now with understanding that this may change in future. And the beautiful thing is that **when you become more mindful of your thoughts & create a stronger more compassionate relationship with yourself it in turn affects how you interact with the world.** What's more is that choosing a loving kind regard motivates others to choose the same.

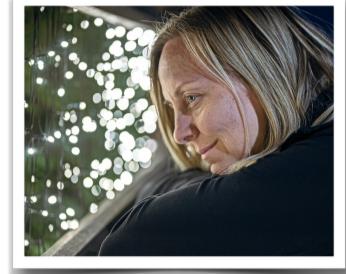
It is quite incredible to consider how much power can come from the quiet reflection of meditation. The benefits are truly profound; not only is all this self empowerment through shifting thought processes but there are also further **positive impacts on the nervous system & brain chemistry!** ([Click to learn more](#)) *this is good information to store in the back of your mind as future motivation to keep at it because there will inevitably be ups & downs.* There will be times when you will wonder if it is worth it and there will be times that it gets uncomfortable. You may uncover aspects of yourself that you would rather not face but when it comes down to it the benefits always seem to outweigh the downsides. **Trust that all of this is part of the process.** Work to embrace it, release any expectations you have of yourself, chose compassion, AND always come back to love.

As a practice, **allow yourself to become conscious of any form of attachment, of falling into fix it mentality, or judgements.** Open the lines of communication within yourself. Steep yourself in honesty & vulnerable transmissions. Create a relationship of trust with yourself. Get to know the different voices in your head. Learn the subtle cues that don't necessarily come with words. Tap into your inner wisdom; let it be your guiding light.

A good way to connect to these energies is to **turn more intimately to the processes of the lungs & the heart;** looking to your breath, feeling your heart beating. Let the breath inform you, move you. Feel the life coursing through you; tap into the magnificence of your being with gratitude & awe. Let this gratefulness & appreciation be part of this system that leads the way.

Other elements to consider in a daily practice... “spirituality or energetic awareness”

It is essential to have decent grasp on the foundations of the more tangible aspects of existence before diving into the next phase. **Being able to anchor in the physical is crucial.** If one cannot ground in this material world or in the body it can lead to some uncomfortable circumstances and altered realities. Even with good effort & equipped with tools, tuning into energetic principles can be destabilizing. *★Keep in mind that this is not meant to deter; it is fundamental knowledge for exploring these practices. Because reaching into the unknown can have profound impacts of the psyche and without support & understanding can lead to internal crises. (I say this as someone with a proclivity to energetic realm and has spent much of my life in & out of existential crisis).*



Although seemingly intimidating, it is also where so much of magic lies. Being able to connect to something bigger than oneself; to tap into a shared collective is also where an unwavering peace can be found. Somehow, this interconnectedness sparks a deep inner knowing that everything is okay. Somehow it helps us traverse deeper into ourselves. Therefore these practices are an entryway to come to greater understanding of our true nature; helping us to live with more purpose.

Living a life with “purpose” is a loaded concept that is best approached delicately because of its all consuming quality of questioning existence. A purpose doesn’t have to be this grand design. In short, living in itself is purpose. *From my personal perspective I believe we are simply here to experience life & all that it entails. Life is a journey that requires nothing more than the simple act of showing up. So it doesn’t have to be so convoluted; it is not prudent to have some specific ambition. I like to relate to it as **intentional living**.* To live life on the wings of **love, compassion, respect, understanding & gratitude; for yourself, for all beings, for all creatures, for the marvellous land we live on & the galaxies beyond.**

Which cycles back to this work. The intention of mindful practices is exactly this. **Setting up every day to live from a place of present awareness with the intent of doing the best you can each & every moment.** The pitfalls of distraction, exhaustion, overwhelm, overwork, etc is reactivity. In todays reality, we are vulnerable to eruption; fizzy drinks, pressurized by the shaking of life, ready to burst. Meditation can be thought of as a mechanism to settle the agitation. A way to consciously reflect, to see the bigger picture & let the bubbles dissipate so we are less activated & have the ability to respond with more awareness.

Thus, this phase of the work **adds in a more expansive view; opening to an enhanced state of awareness into the energetic realms.** Likened to the element of fire &/or space. It has many names; collective consciousness, ethereal plane, universal energy, spirit world, metaphysical plane, etc. Regardless of the name, most philosophies can agree that it an unseen entity that connects everything together. The endless amount of theories surrounding this realm will always shrouded with speculation & conspiracy because how do you know what cannot be known. Religions have tried for generations to do just this but the sadly the history is bleak & covered in travesty that goes against the core of its purpose. There will always be differing opinions on the exact details, and maybe some day science will prove it but for now all we can do is sit in its majesty and marvel about how we get to be a part of something so phenomenally intricate.

According to some philosophies **fire is representative of transformation**. In a similar fashion, fire has the same destructive forces as the wind. It destroys but it also provides sustenance for life. It connects us to deeper knowing; the inescapable gut feelings, butterflies, or nerves in the pit of your belly. This is because the digestive system & the energies of the solar plexus are associated with fire. These digestive fires can be thought of as a source of fuel; an inner solar like energy. Recent theories have even compared the central nervous system to the enteric nervous system (*the neural network of digestion*); marvelling at how vast & unknown it is. Furthermore, from an energetic perspective, this region is known as the seat of the ego, the character, to will & strength yet also the centre of fear. Which means this region is a source to tap into strength to overcome fear to dive into the unknown.

Start slow... as a way to connect to these less concrete concepts within the energetic realms let fire be your inspiration. *Ponder the erratic nature of it, the heat, it's dance, the unpredictability, it's strength & power. Sit with fire (literally or figuratively), let your body move like fire through an open expanse of space.* Imagine more freedom, less structure. **Let your energetic body be your guide you.** TRUST. Get playful. Try to turn off thinking mind & have fun.

The idea is to reach beyond the mind & jump into the sensory; granting yourself access to grasp onto the science that everything in itself is energy and chemistry. How do you personally connect the energetic forces? The inquiry is about going into to examine what you feel on a deeper level. **As humans we are sensitive beings naturally attuned to this invisible web of life yet only some cultures put emphasis on training the senses to tap into it.** Nonetheless we all have the ability to connect into it. All it takes is refining awareness to separate what you feel.

We feel things whether we are conscious or not. There are times when there is a collective energy that is so palpable it is impossible not to be affected by it. Like the overturning of Roe vs. Wade in 2022. You didn't even have to live in the US to feel its devastating impact. But there is also more subtle energies. Think about a room that feels stuffy upon entering. Perhaps there isn't good air flow or maybe there was an argument that just took place. It is possible to perceive these shifts in energy. The reality is that science can only tell us so much about the intricacies of these elusive qualities of existence. Yet anyone that has sensed the pain of a loved one or had a drastic mood change in the presence of another can intuit that there is more than our physical senses.



I believe that energy has influence; that it can leave marks & that it can be felt over vast distances. Wherein lies an interesting phenomenon of how each one of connects in a multitude of ways. Using the stuffy room as an example, some people are natural cleansers. They walk into the room & without even knowing it they are able to rid the room of the heaviness. Or some might internalize it unaware. While others might change the energy; i.e., make jokes. Whether known or not, people are affected by their environments. And whether we like it or not these subtleties will have impact on how we interact with the world. **So the more we can tap into these inner knowings the more we can equip ourselves with tools to aid us as we traverse the wild unknown.**

Therefore mindful practices are an exercise in curiosity; consider what it means to be more than a physical entity. Think beyond the 5 senses and explore a sixth sense. Can you distinguish the subtle vibrations of life? From a scientific perspective all matter consists of microscopic particles in a constant motion. We cannot necessarily 'see' it without the appropriate tools but it is possible to 'know' it, to 'feel' it. It requires a little effort to turn off rational analysis and step fully into limitless possibilities of the unknown. Perhaps even needing to "surrender your disbelief"; in the words of a beloved teacher. **Practice being in your 'energetic' body without trying to conceptualize it, or label it.** Solely 'being' without having to be. **Show up in the interest of pure potential & let the rest unfold.**

Finding your flow...

One of the purposes of having a daily practice is in helping you to navigate life to the best of your ability. To establish a respectful line of communication between you & your inner workings. To access deeper wisdoms & understanding. To connect with a level of self guidance. To build strength in self advocacy. To learn to discern whether the inklings are from your head or your heart. **This path is tricky because it requires both trusting the unknown AND critical analysis.**

Being human is complex! **As the vulnerable humans, living in an age of technological advancement & endless access to information, it is more prudent than ever to sharpen our BS detectors.** With constant exposure to contradictory facts & opinions it can be very difficult to navigate. Especially because of the intrinsic trust within us. From a young age we are taught things like who deserves our trust & who doesn't, who to like or dislike; whether deliberate or subtly implied it affects who we become & how we interact with our surroundings. So that even when we begin self directing it is heavily influenced by the world around us and our experiences. This does not mean that we cannot break free of these constraints but it does take intentional effort to make changes.

Nonetheless there is a tendency to naturally accept things as truth without scrutinization. Unfortunately for us, not everyone has our best intentions at heart & greed plays a gigantic role in intentionally taking advantage of this innate trust. Not to mention, there is so emphasis placed on optics. If it looks good to us, if it sounds good, if its well put together, our brains are highly attracted to it. When considering this as well as confirmation bias, people are at risk of believing misinformation & it makes sense that critical thinking skills tend to be lacking. Especially since we cannot possibly know everything and have to rely on the word of others.

Therefore, **these practices can be used to enhance both of these qualities; to sharpen the senses & strengthen discernment through lens of rationality.** There will be times that we need to lean on the support of others that are more informed so we need to pursue without following blindly. And in times where we are letting ourselves do the guiding we need to do it with the highest intentions for ourselves & others. It is essentially a dance; one that is best negotiated with these conscious awareness practices in tow. *★Keep in mind that it is easy to believe that others have it all together. But do they really? I can say without a doubt that one thing is for certain; we are all stumbling through life!*

Thus we all have our own ways of navigating this dance & the complexities of human nature. Personally, as someone who is overly trusting I have had to practice using more discernment & discretion. Which interestingly created a reverse effect of skepticism, especially of anyone or anything that claims or appears to have it all figured out. Because from my perspective, no one really knows it all. There are levels & layers to our humanness and existence that make it next to impossible to know everything. **We can only do that best we can while traversing along these ever changing landscapes.** Because to be human is to mess up, to climb to the highest moments AND to descend into the lowest valleys. This is the brilliance of life, in all its chaos and all of its beauty.

So as you move through your practices, remember that these rituals are about YOU!

Because although we are all connected, sharing our humanity with many similar qualities we also have our own processes & ways of connecting. What I know & believe will be different from what you know & believe so we are all on our own personal journeys to discovering what works best for us individually. **HOWEVER, please also note that these endeavours inwards are far more than the personal gains that are emphasized.** In wellness, there can be a tendency to get so caught up in your process that it is easy to lose sight of something bigger. *I like to consider us as unique puzzle pieces that all cohesively come together to play a role in the grander whole. So if one of us is suffering, we all suffer. Liberating yourself means also helping to liberate each other. Therefore, the goal lies in working to build a world together in which everyone shares the same rights & freedoms.*

Another way to envision this is to come back to the elements & their harmonious rhythm; **earth, air, fire, water, & space**

working in a beautifully cohesive balance. In Traditional Chinese medicine there is a slightly different variation known as the 5 phases; water, wood, fire, earth & metal. In this theory the heart corresponds with fire, the lungs with metal, the liver with wood, the spleen with the earth & the kidneys with water. All working in a balance to promote optimal health & wellbeing.

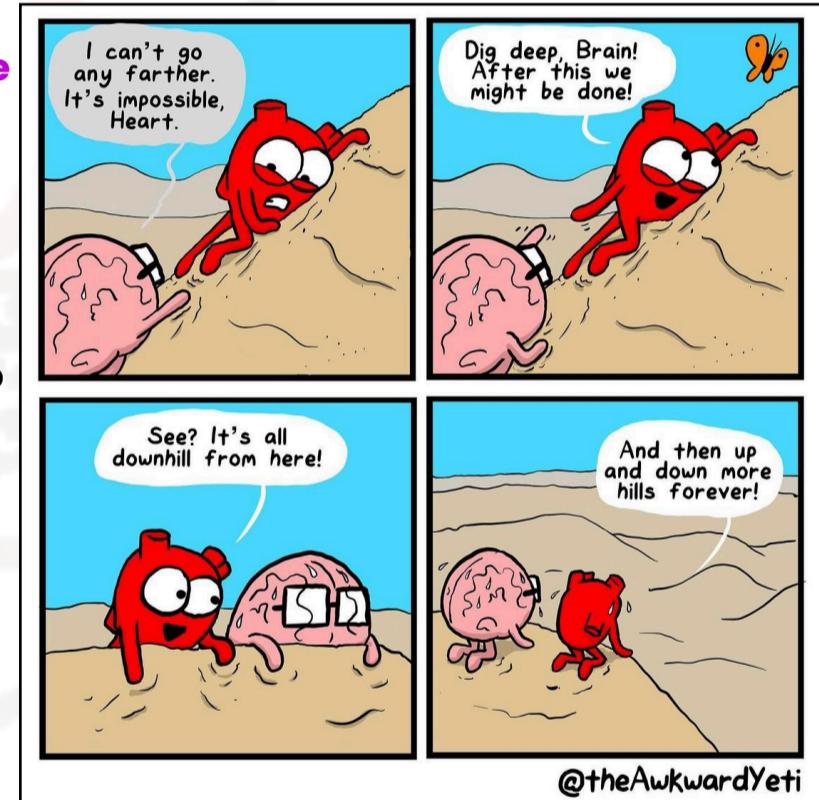


These 5 phases also connect to what is known as the 5 spiritual aspects within. The water is Zhi (the will or sense of perseverance), The wood is Hun (the ethereal soul, related to our growth), The heart is Shen (the mind or light of consciousness), the earth is Yi (thought or intention) & metal is Po (the corporeal soul, related to our sense of surrender to the order of life). It is thought that when the first breath is taken this part of the soul enters the body and that it leaves with the last breath. Therefore the Po is connected both spiritually & physiologically the life force & the regulatory functions of the heart & lungs. **Without the breath we cease to exist.**

However, it is complicated because **in actuality we need all the elements to function. Of course air is crucial; of course our own well-being is our primary responsibility. BUT without the other organs, without community, there is not enough nourishment to sustain life.** It all works together! We cannot neglect one for the other.

Nonetheless the breath is such an good indicator of what is going on in the grander scheme of everything. So a great question to ask when checking in is...how is my breathing? As you embark upon the variations of your daily practices; **let them connect you with your own internal mechanisms. Pay close attention to your unique processes.** Do these regular check ins. Use the breath as a barometer & guide. Use it to your advantage; **practice using slow, gentle breath in & out through your nose as often as you can.** *Practice the art of finding peace & calm internally no matter the storms arising within inner & outer environments.* Its impossible to control what life brings but there is opportunity to alter responses. Sometimes that means getting vocal & standing in your power and sometimes that means getting quiet & reflective. Only you can determine your actions. These practices are in a sense guiding you on journey of a self empowered loving state.

ALSO, find rest when you need it, give yourself permission to be at leisure. Find ease & enjoyment as much as you can. Look to your teachers, your care givers, your friends, your guides but make a commitment to process & choose based on your distinct guiding system. **Always remembering this ability to get quiet, to listen so that more importantly you have the confidence & the courage to move from that your true authentic nature.** So that as you evolve through your processes you can look back with admiration of how much you've grown. The breath is one of the greatest reminders of this inherent transitory nature. When we can surrender to the inevitability of change, to harness the yogic wisdoms of non-attachment, we can open the door to a state of peace that everything will enfold as it does and all we can do is face it as it comes. **AND most importantly, find joy! The easiest way to stay connected to your practices is to enjoy them, with love & compassion for yourself and your process.**



There are endless practices out there but here are a few to consider exploring...

Try a **Rhythmic Breathing practice**, start small, breathe in for 3 counts & breath out for 3 counts. You can begin to increase this at your comfort from 4 to 5 to 6. Then feel free to explore adding in a held breath between the inhale & the exhale; pausing for 1 or 2 counts. Eventually if it feels good you can allow the practice to settle into a rhythm of 7 counts to breathe in, 3 counts to hold, & 7 counts to breathe out. Repeat. You can do this from a couple of mins up to 21 minutes. *To get you started, click on the link below for a mindful practice that incorporates this rhythm.*

Module 2 Practice (use this video for inspiration)

CAUTION: Rhythmic breathing is thought to safe in general, although some argue that is is not ideal for children & that it can be enabling for obsessive compulsive behaviour. If it becomes uncomfortable, you can simply chose a different practice. However, **ALWAYS be cautious when adding in breath retentions** especially while pregnant.

Try an **Alternate Nasal Rhythmic breathing practice**, it begins similarly. Start slow. With dominant hand, rest thumb on one nostril and ring finger on the other. Press gently on the left nostril, breathe in through the right for 4, release & breathe out the left for 4 while pressing gently on right, breathe in through the left for 4, release & breathe out the right for 4 while pressing gently on left, breathe in through the right for 4, repeat back & forth. Can increase to 7 with the option to add in a hold between the inhale and the exhale.

Cover the left nostril, breathe in through the right for 7, cover both nostrils for 3, breathe out the left for 7, without holding breathe in the left for 7, cover both for 3, breathe out through the right for 7, without holding breathe in through right for 7, cover for 3, repeat back & forth for a couple of minutes up until 21 minutes. *To get started, click the link below for a mindful practice that incorporates this rhythm.*

Module 3 Practice (use this video for inspiration)

CAUTION: This practice is generally however it can cause internal discomfort. Same cautions apply for breath retention and rhythmic breathing. ***Please work within your comfort levels & heed the breath retention cautions.***

Try a **concentration meditation practice**, light a candle & gaze upon the flame. Engross yourself in its nature. Then close your eyes & visualize the flame behind closed eyes. When it disappears from your internal gaze, open your eyes again & see the flame. Repeat. Do this again & again for 5-10 minutes, each time trying to hold the image of the flame longer than the last. Or, simply look upon the flame the entire time. If your eyes are sensitive to light, you can just try and visualize a flame or fire in your minds eye. Be with the tantalizing nature of fire; let it mesmerize you & leave you fully immersed in its presence.

As you work on finding your rhythm connecting with your personal daily practices. Notice which parts of the practice you enjoy the most. Spend more time diving into those aspects. Your mindful practice does not have to be a chore. In fact, the more you find enjoyment in it the more likely you will do it. *★Be mindful that reluctance & avoidance tactics are typical obstacles of this process. The idea is to develop a consistent practice but not at the cost of shaming & blaming. This goes completely against its purpose. Do you best not to skip it but work to diminish any guilt that comes to the surface; trust the process. Let it come & go as it needs to. Design your practices around what nourishes your soul; get creative.*

Because **this work is continuous**, ultimately its about digging in to figure out **what ignites you to support sustaining your practice moving forward**. So that in time, mindful practices become so integrated that even a trip to the grocery store can be a meditative experience. Because in the words of Jeff Foster meditation is *“pure fascination with this moment, exactly as it is. It means diving into ‘the sacred mess of this present moment’ with curiosity and child-like wonder, drenching our deepest wounds with a loving Awareness, bringing light to the darkness. In true meditation, we come to discover: We are perfect, exactly as we are.”*

I consider it an honour to share this work with you. I hope these pages help you to find a rhythm & flow in connecting with your own practices. Please reach out if you have questions or comments. It is my ambition that we can move together with more love & compassion in our hearts. That we can bring to reality a world that is fair & just breathing together as one; healing this planet one breath at a time.

Wishing you well on your continued journey of self discovery!

with love,

~ lori

Daily Practice Tips....

Keep it simple!

Make sure it is accessible and possible for you to commit to (*having unrealistic expectations for yourself only leads to unmet goals with disappointment &/or self-ridicule which is contrary to the objective of this work*)

Be kind to yourself

Get organized; ie. make lists for time management purposes (*one list can be immediate task & another can be long term tasks or goals*)

Make yourself a priority

Do practices that make you feel good & refreshed

Have fun!

Listen to your body

Do not worry about what it looks like; put emphasis on what it feels like

Do not push yourself beyond your capacity

Use a daily tracker to keep in the rhythm (*example on the following page*)

Don't take yourself too seriously.

Make your own list of tips that work for you personally

Movement & Mobility options...

[How to do a Qi Gong Connecting Practice](#)

[How to do Shoulder Mobility](#)

[How to do Spinal Articulation](#)

[How to do a QI Gong Shoulder Mobility Practice](#)

[How to do a Qi Gong Mobility Exercise](#)

[How to do Release Practices](#)

[How to do a Qi Gong Release Practice](#)



★ There are TONS of movement & mobility based options. Check out...

[@yogadetour](#) [@stopchasingpain](#) [@actionhiro](#) [@coach_rt3](#) [@steph.rose.phase6](#)
[@movementbydavid](#) [@upgradeguys](#) & many more

And lastly...

Find your inner strength & embrace your weird!!

daily habit tracker...

a daily dose of...

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...to nourish & take care of myself

