



## Top Coaches Share...

### **13 Top Coaches Share Their Extreme Self Care Strategies.**

Practicing Extreme Self  
Care is the first step to  
everything you desire!



# Top Coaches Share Their Extreme Self Care Strategies

## Introduction

The Concept of Extreme Self Care requires a radical shift in one's attitude. Self care leads to feeling better about yourself and your life. Self care provides a natural shift to experiencing every area of your life in a higher, more positive way.

There are many things that you can change about your life: jobs, careers, spouses/partners, cities, countries, houses, cars, etc. But most people find changing the "outer" does little to change the inner feelings – and the turmoil those feelings can cause.

Change the outside all you want. But, until you learn to change the way you care for yourself – the way you love, nurture and appreciate yourself – it will all have very little impact on your life.

Things may change for awhile, but eventually you return right back to the same place. Unless, that is, you decide to change yourself from the inside.

You have the power to decide right now to change how you treat the most important person in your life... YOU! Then and only then will things flow together and begin to manifest in the ways you want.

For many people, it takes a trauma to provide momentum for such changes. A person experiences an illness, a separation, the death of a loved one, and then decides to make some changes.

Wouldn't it be fantastic to get the "kick in the pants" you need without the traumatic catalyst? Wouldn't it be nice to move beyond your self imposed comfort zone and begin to experience the joy of giving yourself the energy and attention you deserve? And, wouldn't it be wonderful to begin today?

You're probably asking, "**What is extreme self care?**" We perceive it as "**the practice of fully committing to a nurturing lifestyle.**" Extreme Self Care requires connecting with yourself on a daily basis, deciding what you need and then following through to make it happen.



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The question we believe you need to answer is, "Do you believe you are worth it?" Are you worth making the decision to change those things in your life that are not serving you in the highest way possible? Are you ready to have more fun, create more artistry and creativity in your life? Are you ready to feel successful? Each day, would you like to know you have done everything possible to love yourself? Will you start right now to create a lifestyle of Extreme Self Care?

You are worth it! You do deserve it! Every experience you have while taking extreme care of yourself will feel better than the last.

In this book Top Coaches from around the world share their personal strategies for practicing Extreme Self Care daily. You will learn the ways little things can make a world of difference in the journey called your life.

Whether you try one strategy or dive into them all, your most important decision is the permission to love, nurture and care for yourself each and every day. Practicing Extreme Self Care is the first step to everything you desire.

Please Enjoy **13 Top Coaches Share Their Extreme Self Care Strategies!**



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# Top Coaches Share Their Extreme Self Care Strategies

## From Turmoil to Tranquility by Carol McKay

### My quest for peace and quiet

Growing up, my home was filled with pandemonium. I was the oldest of four children, with a stay-at-home-mom who opened our home after school to neighborhood children whose parents worked full time. The house was constantly filled with sounds - laughter mixed with bickering, infused with taunting, yelling and my mother's occasional futile attempts to vocalize her displeasure and gain control.

The television was treated like part of the family. It was awakened early in the morning, and it created the backdrop for every aspect of our lives. From game shows and soaps providing company for Mom during the day to cartoons in the afternoon, it seems the TV was always on, adding to the cacophony of our home. Dad would yell at the television during news and sports broadcasts. We invited the TV to dinner, and I remember "Truth or Consequences" - and later "Wheel of Fortune" keeping me from paying attention to my food.

The television helped me absorb facts and form opinions. It also reinforced everything I thought was wrong in my life. I longed to have a life more like the people on the screen. I wanted to have the perfect skin and hair of Marsha Brady. I wanted to be Keith Partridge's girlfriend. The constant blather of the television was not only my companion - it routinely reinforced my feelings of worthlessness and my self-defined shortcomings.

Throughout my life, noise in the background was the constant. I would walk in the door from school or work and turn the TV on. I'd wake to the radio...I even had a shower radio, lest I be alone with my thoughts even then.

If it was too quiet, I was uncomfortable. Irritated. Frustrated. I thought I couldn't focus. If my roommates wanted the house or apartment quiet to read or study, I'd lock myself in my bedroom so I could have noise. Even though my home was quiet, I would still choose to clutter my mind with the sounds of distraction.

I realize now, that's really what it was. The noise distracted me from my own thoughts. And my own thoughts at the time weren't very pretty.



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I had moments with little glimpses into “quiet world”. Tent camping with no electricity and no radio reception. Spending time in museums. Power outages. Therapeutic exercises designed to let me begin to be at ease with myself. I found those glimpses of quiet world to be both interesting and terrifying. Interesting because I had never really given myself the opportunity to sit quietly and just be. Without having to do. Without justifying. Without feeling like I had to perform or produce.

But admittedly, also terrifying. The quiet forced me to listen to the voices that told me I was not enough. I didn’t have enough. I didn’t do enough. I could never be enough. The voices reinforced all my limiting beliefs. I’d always be fat. I’d never be successful.

It makes a lot of sense that I would want to drown out those voices, doesn’t it?

### **The Evolution**

When I started my journey of self-discovery and spiritual renewal in 1990, I had no awareness of the ways I was using the television to hold myself back. I used the noise to block my discomfort with my self.

Little by little, bit by bit, I became aware of the ways I used noise – in the same ways people use food, alcohol, even drugs. I used noise to numb myself, and to allow myself not to hear my own voice, my own thoughts.

In the beginning of my conscious attempt to experience quiet, a few minutes of the TV off at a time was about all I could stand. As the periods of quiet became longer, I found something fairly amazing. I had interesting thoughts! I also found I had worries and negativity and self-doubt. But, it felt OK. Hearing my negative thoughts didn’t make me act out or crumple me into a little pile of depression.

Today, I choose quiet most of the time. I still enjoy a little television, but I use it as entertainment, not as a drug to numb and protect me from my thoughts. I enjoy a little radio in the car, but I also enjoy arriving at my destination feeling completely relaxed...because the journey to my destination has been filled with only automobile sounds and the relaxing sound of my thoughts, intentions and goals.

If you currently choose to surround yourself with distracting sounds, I recommend the following exercise to help care for yourself and begin to find peace. You may want to take only 5 minutes here or 10 minutes there at first. As you become more comfortable with stillness, you may find yourself seeking it out more and more.



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## **Quiet Self-Care**

Please try this right now. Wherever you are, begin by turning off all sounds. Turn off the television, the radio, the Ipod, the CD player. Close the windows. Go ahead. I'll wait.

.....  
Are you back? Good.  
Everything's quiet, yes?

Now take a nice, long, slow, deep breath, and gently exhale. A little more slowly and deliberate now, allow yourself to breathe in the quiet. Hold that breath inside you for a few moments. And as you exhale, listen to the sounds of your exhalation. How about one more time? Nice deep breath --- hold --- and observe the sound of your breathing.

What other sounds are you noticing in this moment? The whirring of appliances? The rumble of traffic? Are there any other sounds you're able to eliminate? If not...if there are just sounds you're observing...could you just welcome them to be here as you continue the exercise?

Allow yourself to become aware of the internal sounds of the moment. The sounds of your body, as well as the sounds of your mind. In this quiet moment, begin to observe your thoughts. Where are you now? Are you here, fully present? Or is your mind trying to dance in the past or ponder the future?

Is your mind testing you? Are your thoughts trying to get you to change the moment? Are you feeling a wanting to escape? Allow yourself to welcome those feelings that may be begging for the noise to return. Acknowledge them with a nice deep breath, and allow yourself to settle a little deeper into the moment.

Whenever you notice your thoughts drifting away from the moment, try saying these words to yourself: "Be Here, Now" and allow your attention come back to your breathing.

And, just allow yourself to be quiet. And rest. Know that everything is perfect right now.



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## **Keeping the Peace**

As you find yourself becoming more and more comfortable with the quiet, you may find you choose it more often than you choose to be surrounded with sound. You may even be so comfortable with the quiet that you find yourself beginning to explore new ways to experience inner peace. There are myriad ways to quiet the mind. The ones that feel right for you will begin to show up in your consciousness because that's what you will be seeking!

Quieting your environment to begin quieting your mind is a simple and elegant way to create the space to begin caring for yourself in many, many ways.

I wish you quiet joy, and joyful quiet. Peace.





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### Meet Carol McKay

Carol McKay is a Certified Life Coach, writer and motivational speaker. She has followed a roundabout path to bring her to this place. She has lived an interesting adventure of adapting to new homes and environments in places as far-flung as San Jose, California; Ft. Smith and Fayetteville, Arkansas; Orlando, Florida; Yakima, Washington, and currently Modesto, California. A very large circle has returned her home.

But the most dramatic changes in her life were not due to those coast-to-coast moves, but rather to giving and receiving love unconditionally in her life.

Her vast personal and internal changes have provided the insights she now uses as a Life Coach and motivational speaker.

In addition to battling a physical condition that was the source of ongoing embarrassment and shame into adulthood, Carol was also an overweight child, teen, and adult. More than sixteen years ago, Carol let go of 70 pounds, which also allowed her to release her attachments to anger, low-self-esteem and depression and create a loving life of *joyful abundance and abundant joy*. Her nearly 20 year marriage and 16 years maintaining her weight goal stand as testament to the power of believing all things are possible.

Carol trusts the universal law of attraction completely, knowing she is exactly where she is supposed to be, doing exactly what she is supposed to do right now. She serves as a Life Coach, helping her clients to believe in themselves and their ability to love and be loved. She honors her clients as the perfect individuals they already are, and helps them see their possibilities and allow their perfection to shine.

Carol believes the key to a beautiful life lies in understanding the transitory nature of feelings. Most people allow their feelings to dictate their lives, inform their physical health, and block their ability to experience true joy and freedom. As a Sedona Method facilitator, Carol helps her clients identify their feelings and allow themselves to let of their attachment to these feelings.



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Carol's perfect clients are ready to abandon the beliefs keeping them stuck in the same...the same job, the same weight, the same anger, the same fear, the same relationships. Carol holds the door open to freedom, and helps her clients create something new and wonderful.

How to reach Carol:

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[Carol@dreamcoacher.com](mailto:Carol@dreamcoacher.com)

Carol's free monthly newsletter, DreamLift, offers ideas to help people move toward their dreams. Subscribe at [www.liftyourdream.com](http://www.liftyourdream.com). You'll receive Carol's ebook "Losing your Bugbear" as a special gift when you subscribe.



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## Surfing Through Life by Helene Desruisseaux

Anyone old enough to remember those old surfer movies are likely to think that my title implies that my self-care plan is to live as a happy-go-lucky type of person. I'm afraid I don't have it in me, at least not as a natural inclination. I was born a worrier and a work horse. Plus I'm an empath, meaning that I feel other people's feelings and can inherit their emotions quite easily.

So what qualifies a responsible, reliable, caretaker-type like me to talk about surfing through life? Well for one, having extensive experience in paying the price when I don't. But especially, knowing for a fact that surfing isn't nearly as laid back and easy as those old movies made it appear. You need to be fit, experienced, and focused.

Well, that doesn't sound like much fun. Great self-care advice that is!

OK, so it's not a perfect analogy. Maybe I better first get more specific about what I do -and need to do -- to lead a good life.

### **1. Decide what I want**

Have you noticed that when you are working long and hard at something you really enjoy or want, you don't notice the time? You don't feel resentment at spending so much time at this that you don't have time for something else. You don't have a conflict of priorities.

But a lot of times, we are not clear on what we really really want. Or we haven't revisited our decision of a while ago, and haven't "re-decided" what we want now as opposed to last year.

When I was using all of my free time to get my coaching accreditation, I was engaged, interested, jazzed. But afterwards, when I still didn't devote much time to connecting with old friends but kept myself parked in front of my computer researching this or that, I started feeling off, incomplete,...and guilty. I hadn't taken a step back to review why I'm doing what I'm doing.



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Lesson learned: Make sure I know what I really want and revisit that every so often.

## **2. Defuse fears, doubts, tension and other negative emotions**

We all know that much of our fears are unfounded, but still we allow them to trap us. A lot of that is old imprinting, which we find hard to erase (and no wonder, given how humans are designed, but that's a subject for another time).

Some people feel it's best to just focus on what you want and stay in action no matter what. Visualize and think positively. Those are great tools, yet I need something more.

You see for me the ultimate self care is what leads to my most desired state, one of peaceful power, of calm confidence. To be there, I need to release the hold that my old (or recent) fears, doubts, stresses or other difficult emotions have on me. And here's how I do that.

- First I need to devote some uninterrupted time daily (even a period as short as 15 minutes helps).
- During that time, I direct my attention to how I feel noticing any tension, fear, etc.
- One by one, I defuse the tension around the emotion through either a releasing exercise (using for example the wonderful Sedona Method, [www.sedona.com](http://www.sedona.com)), or one of the energy techniques like EFT (Emotional Freedom Technique, [www.emofree.com](http://www.emofree.com)). I can also do that on past memories to remove the impact of old imprinting on how I presently deal with the world.
- Easing the tension allows me to connect with the person that I am under the fears, the one that operates with calmness, wisdom and universal creativity.

Both Sedona and EFT are excellent methods to bring us to a more peaceful state, and can suit even people who find it hard to meditate. I also like to use breathing techniques taught by HeartMath ([www.heartmath.org](http://www.heartmath.org)).

Devoting those 15 to 30 minutes a day to clearing away emotional debris has an amazing impact not only on the stress level, but also on physical health and energy.



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### 3. Get physically fit

As a coach, I spend a lot of time sitting down, on the phone and on the computer. My rational, emotional and intuitive mind gets a workout, but I need to make sure I do the same with my physical body.

That's not just for looks or for health; it's also necessary if I want to continue being effective as a coach. You see working out at least 4 times a week and preferably more often, makes me feel more grounded, more connected to my body and therefore more in tune with how it feels. And a lot of times our intuition and our feelings make themselves known through our body: after all, we do talk about having a "gut feel", or a "knot in our stomach".

I re-learned that recently the hard way: I had stopped going to the gym because I was busy and because I figured I could take walks instead. I know better; I know I have the kind of body that needs more than a walk, but I rationalized my way to increased inertness and disconnection. My inactivity also eventually started eroding my self confidence and sense of mastery because I felt more fragile.

### 4. Stay aware during the day and protect my energy

We all get buffeted by all sorts of triggers and energy drains during the day, and before we know it, we can get dragged into thinking, feeling and acting in ways that don't serve us. It doesn't have to be caused by major confrontations either.

For example, as a coach and an empath, I have to make sure I keep my energy clean from one client to another. So before a session, I remind myself of my intent and focus my attention on the person with which I'm about to interact. During our time together, I stay present and give positive energy to our common work. And afterwards, I "clear the decks" of any sticky energy to start fresh with the next person.

This is relevant not only to coaching or client-related work, but also to any interaction and tasks we have to do during the day. Focusing on the moment rather than dragging in the past is a great stress reliever and performance enhancer. If I need to, I also can apply the releasing or energy methods at any time during the day when I'm experiencing tension.



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Another important part of self-care is getting protection from the radiation that comes from my computer, cordless and cell phone. I didn't think much of this topic until recently, when I found myself unusually tired and foggy-brained. Research and experiment brought me to look into the possibility that it could be the computer and cordless phone/headset combo that I use for much of the day. And it was. Thank goodness there now are protective devices we can use; who could work without our technology? ([www.mybiopro.com/supermind2](http://www.mybiopro.com/supermind2) has more information on the subject).

### **5. Remember what's important**

My days are so much better if I spend a few minutes declaring to myself what I intend to do with it, and connecting with what matters to me most. That includes connecting with my spiritual source.

When I do that, I am much more able to keep things in perspective. I also accomplish a lot more with less stress. And when I am going through a stressful phase, taking a few minutes several times a day to re-connect with what matters helps bring me back to my desired state of peaceful power.

So where's the surfing in all of this? Well, to surf you need to:

1. decide you want to do it,
2. deal with any fears or doubts about going out there otherwise it's going to be too stressful to do it or enjoy it,
3. get physically fit enough to survive and enjoy the experience,
4. stay alert to catch oncoming waves and to stay balanced on the board, and get protection from sunburn
5. and remember why it's worth paddling like heck and risk encountering sharks.

Got to go; I have a sudden urge to listen to old Beach Boy songs.



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### About Helene Desruisseaux (“Desrusso”)

I come from a family of successful entrepreneurs, and over the years observed the gifts and pressures of that lifestyle. The increased visibility bringing you many connections...and the feeling you can't afford to show any weakness. Not needing to ask your boss if you can take off for a few hours...and always being on call, always having ultimate responsibility.

It seemed like success often brought business and professional people the satisfaction of accomplishment, but also a lot of stress and loneliness (underneath the energetic positive get-things-done attitude). In one rare moment of real connection, my father dropped the “man in charge” persona and looked at me with haunted eyes and said: “There is no such thing as happiness”. Then as quickly as it came, the moment passed and he was

back to business as usual. Thirty years later, I still remember it vividly.

In my many years in senior corporate management, and as banker, financial advisor, consultant, corporate trainer and educator, I had the opportunity to observe and talk with my clients, contacts, staff and co-workers, and the vast majority of us are suffering from the pressures of competing, outperforming and accomplishing. But we keep on; after all, that's the way it is, what else can you do? Things will get better once we get that deal, sales target, promotion, income level, company size, etc. Once we have a family that will help us feel anchored..., or once we are free from so many family obligations.

Can you relate?

Feeling like we are always on the run, under the gun, needing to be “on”, affects our health, our looks, our personal and business relationships, our connection with our own Self. Ironically, it backfires eventually sabotaging our success to various degrees. (And by the way, what is success and what is success for?)

But like we said: what can you do about it? That's what I devoted the last 10 years to researching, exploring not only traditional and performance psychology but also how



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human beings are designed energetically, and how we can uncover that peaceful powerful part of us that can be our guide and our safe haven.

I now run a coaching and training service called "Success Worth Living", devoted to improving business and professional people's quality of life while taking their success to an even higher level.

Come and visit [www.successworthliving.com](http://www.successworthliving.com) and download my latest free quality of life tip. It is designed to be practical in context with our modern lives.

And I welcome any comment, question, or conversation, so feel free to e-mail me at [helene@successworthliving.com](mailto:helene@successworthliving.com) .

May you enjoy peaceful power,

Helene Desruisseaux, MBA, DNM, D.Ac, Certified Professional Coach





# Top Coaches Share Their Extreme Self Care Strategies

## Eleven ways I take extra ordinary care for myself by Jo Romano

- 1. Love Purpose.** My purpose in life is to love. I do that by being in service to others with compassion and without judgment. My best gift that I give is to just be" with someone, look them in their eyes, smile, listen without judgment, ego, attachment or getting in their way to express their truth, and just holding their hand in silence. My purpose is to receive.
- 2. Love People.** Keep myself open to RECEIVING a connection and instant rapport with people in my life. My family, my friends, my work mates and new people who come across my path each day. I do not need to ask 'what is the purpose of my relating to this person?' I know the purpose and see their perfection in all of their imperfections and what is "not quite right yet". People learn in their own time, at their own pace. I celebrate what is working for them and in what is next for them and share in their growth and journey.
- 3. Love Simplicity.** Life is reduced to what truly matters and is meaningful for me to live a dynamic and happy life. I focus on that meaning and set my intentions each morning, and each moment, in relationships, with my work projects, in conversations with anyone. I ask for what I want to experience during the day. I open my heart to receive the gifts that are mine to have each day. I often think of this as "diamonds under the rock". The rock is right there in front of me, all I have to do is pick it up and pick from the diamonds that are there just for me. This is one thing I do to care for myself. I go to pick up the rock and see the diamonds, pick one up and feel cared for and blessed and know "I am loved" and "I am good enough".
- 4. Love What is.** Byron Katie, wrote the book "Loving What Is". It has become a very simple mantra in my life. I love letting go of my confusion, anger, frustration, my hurt, and rather than worrying or fighting back in thought and action, I "love what is" and take responsibility for my power to create a calm, serene moment out of chaos.



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5. **Love consequences.** When I do something I am ashamed of, disappointed in myself with, and sometimes down right rude, stupid, or unreasonable, I happily embrace the consequences. When I do something rude, my experience will feel icky. Instead of blaming it on someone else, I take responsibility for my thoughts, actions, and the circumstances that "I" placed myself in the first place. I see the consequences as loving supportive colorful stepping stones to "getting it right and making things better" for me.

6. **Love light.** There is nothing that nourishes me more than the warmth of the sun. I happen to live in a cloudy state so there are many days where the sun sleeps behinds the white and grey dusty clouds. So how do I love the sun? I see it in my mind's eye. I visualize it slowly seeping into every pore of my skin, burrowing deeper and deeper into my blood and bones. When there is sun and warmth, I forget about the elements and feel like I am in a paradise picture post card. It feels so nice.

7. **Love Children and family.** Jaimen, Chandra, Natessa, Sajana and all the children of the world and the mothers and fathers that created them and the village of people that raise them. There are great injustices being done to children by their adults. When we as adults do not take extraordinary care of ourselves, we neglect our children and they feel hungry, lonely, tired, angry and unsafe with us. I am also speaking of the many adult children who live with their trauma from childhood. Children are little people, who are so cute. They are magical in nature until that magical child matures (Joseph Chilton Pierce). That's where the real loving comes in - standing by a child loving him or her as they explore their world, trip and fall, cry and get angry. Loving is not about fixing. It is about never leaving a child's side so they know they are cared for. This helps them grow to take-extraordinary care of-themselves when they grow up.

8. **Love curiosity.** I love to travel and walk lands that are foreign to me. To spend a day with a family from a different culture in their homes, towns, and countries is my delight. I love to meet someone and not have a clue who they are or what they are trying to communicate to me. I love to learn new things. My curiosity peaks when my husband, who loves history, science, and people, tells me unknown facts and quirky stories about mankind and the forces of nature.



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9. **Love color.** Color brightens my day because it represents pleasantries, beauty, a dynamic "colorful" life. A good day is when I choose a color to paint on my wall that transcends the wall and represents mystical images deep into the color on the wall. Colorful clothes are fun to wear. Most of my clothing comes from thrift shops. I love old things around me too and wonder about the colorful lives of those who used them before me.

10. **Love tradition and stories.** Creating rituals and ethnic ways of cooking, crafts, walking a labyrinth, singing lullabies and reading children's books, gardening, receiving sacraments and rights of passages. I tell stories I heard from my father and grandmother and delight in watching my children, the next generation, ache for the same traditions and stories to do and tell their own children later on.

11. **Love the water.** The ocean is my home. So I go to it often in my mind's eye. The strong waves pull me under and I wonder what this unknown place is all about. I fear it. I love it. I walk out of it onto the shore ready to take on another day.



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### Meet Jo Romano

Jo Romano is President of Josephine Romano Associates and Green Mountain Life Coaching, Consulting, and Training based in Montpelier, Vermont, USA. She has a passion for working with motivated parents, lawyers, managers, small business owners, and coaches on growing their coaching skills, knowledge and attitude and helping them to reach their personal and professional potential.

She provides individual, team and community coaching support, planning and facilitation, and training design and delivery. With advanced professional tools she helps any individual or group to move forward swiftly and successfully in achieving their desired outcomes

She has worked in the Vermont Judiciary, Human Services and in local communities in Vermont for 35 years and has loved every minute of it.

She holds the following certifications:

- Certified Comprehensive Coach, The Coaching Institute
- Certified Substance Abuse Prevention Consultant
- Master Teacher of Dialogue Education through Global Learning Partners, Inc.
- Health Realization: Mind Consciousness, and Thought Trainer
- Master Parent Coach Trainer at the Universityofmasters.com

Jo believes that by with intention and focus we can and do live extraordinarily happy lives. Learn more about Jo at [www.greenmountainlifecoach.com](http://www.greenmountainlifecoach.com)



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## 7 Essential Strategies for Extreme Self-Care by Kathi Frank

### Self-Care Strategy #7

**Begin each day with gratitude.** This may sound like a terrible place to start self-care when you feel frazzled, tired and wrung out by the demands of your life. However, I have found it to be the most invigorating action for beginning each day. As your eyes open in the morning and you begin thinking about every task that needs to be performed before you can lay your head back down tonight, push those thoughts aside for just a moment or two. Before your feet hit the floor, experience a true sense of gratitude for your current life circumstances.

Think about your good fortune. If you are blessed to share a bed with a significant partner, acknowledge the sweetness of that relationship. Reach over and gently touch the person in your bed with tender appreciation for them being in your life. Recall the other blessings that might otherwise slip into being taken for granted...children, your home, your job/career, your extended family, friends, your hometown, state, province and/or country, your faith in a higher power or anything that comes to mind when in a state of gratitude.

It won't take long to do this brief inventory of your blessings. Rest assured, it will change the tone of your entire day. I have come to believe that whatever gets attention from me tends to grow. If I begin my day acknowledging all my blessings, I become rich with more abundance than can be counted.

### Self-Care Strategy #6

**Follow your biorhythms.** You probably know if you are a 'morning person' or if you reach your peak performance as the sun begins to set. If you will schedule your day with respect for the natural rhythm of your energy, you will get more done with less effort.

Many of us tend to let our schedules manage us. We try to accommodate the needs and wants of others without any regard for what makes us most efficient. The truth is, you are wasting tons of your most important commodity – your energy – if you don't pay attention to when you are most powerful.



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Of course, we cannot always make the world around us comply with our own personal energy plan. But you will be surprised how much more you will get accomplished in each day if you schedule your high demand tasks in your high energy times of day.

If you have been living your life following the demands and expectations of others, you may have never taken an energy inventory. Let me give you a few suggestions about how to determine your personal biorhythm. It will take a little attention and effort to begin this inventory, but the time you will save in the long run will be huge.

Use a calendar with hourly slots of time. Most people have access to a "Daytimer" or some other type of calendar. If you currently do not use such a scheduling device, you can purchase such pages at an office supply or simply write the hours of the day on a piece of paper.

Start this exercise at the beginning of your day. During the first hour after waking, rate your energy level with a number 1-10. A '1' means you are dragging yourself around with extremely low energy. '10' means that you are jazzed and excited about the things you are doing.

I already know what you are thinking. You will relate your energy to the task, rather than to the time of day. To a certain extent, you have already devised a pattern of energy use that maximizes your natural biorhythm. But for now, record each hour with a 1-10 rating. Do this for at least three days. If you can manage it, try doing it for 5 days – Monday through Friday.

Now, you can test your theory about task energy vs biorhythm energy. Try doing some of the tasks you normally do when in low energy when you are naturally energetic. Or try to do something requiring high energy at the time of day when you typically find yourself dragging. No doubt that you will find this reversal will prove the wisdom of following your own personal biorhythm.

The next task is to intentionally schedule your day in such a way that it uses this newfound knowledge about your personal energy cycles. Any time that you have a choice, slot your most demanding tasks during your personal peak performance time of day. You will produce higher quality work in less time than when you approached energy management in a more haphazard way.



# Top Coaches Share Their Extreme Self Care Strategies

## Self-Care Strategy #5

**Structure your day with breaks for renewal.** Do you sometimes find that you have been rushing through your day performing one task after another and have not taken a moment to slow down? Have you ever skipped a meal because you didn't find the time? Have you ever missed an appointment because you were working too hard to recognize the time passing?

Before I got a coach, I would begin my day in real estate around 7am with phone calls, paperwork and other busy tasks. Sometimes it would be 3pm when I recognized that I had not taken time for lunch. During that time of not taking care of myself, I developed severe hypoglycemia. At one point, I had symptoms of diabetes. Real estate agents make \$0 when they are ill. Although my nature is perpetual and I do not naturally see time passing, I learned that self care was essential to simply making a living.

My coach suggested two tools for breaking down my day into segments that allowed several breaks in the day. The first one was scheduling appointments for phone calls, lunches and other proactive tasks in mid morning and mid afternoon slots. By honoring those appointments I had a natural cadence to my day. I stopped the eternal list of reactive phone calls and changed gears into proactive work. As I shifted into creative activities and out of crisis mode, I was able to find moments for a deep breath and renewal.

When I had particularly challenging tasks to do, administrative tasks like paperwork or organization, I used an egg timer to counteract my tendency to immerse myself into that work. By using the two tools suggested by my coach, I was able to manage my time and renew my health. With renewal breaks scattered throughout my day, I was more efficient and was able to also increase my income.

## Self-Care Strategy #4

**Surround yourself with those that support you.** Your mother may have told you that you that you are known by the friends you keep. As an adult, you know that the influence of the other people in your life is profound. The more you surround yourself with positive, optimistic people whom you like and like you, the more you will feel nourished and complete.

Take the time to make a list of everyone that you spend a great deal of time with in the average day. Beside each name, give them a rating A-C. A is for "Always supportive".



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B is for “Being There” for those that are available for support if you really need it. C is for “Critical and Caustic” and this designation goes for those that drain your energy.

Once you have made this evaluation, you can proactively decide whether you want to spend more or less time with these individuals. If you have a lot of C’s, you may want to put special effort into attracting more A-type people into your life. A coach can help you devise a plan for making this change in your life.

You can also choose your environment. Little changes in your surroundings can make a huge difference in your life. Do something to make your corner of the world a place of personalization and peace.

For me, I get great pleasure from keeping fresh flowers on the bar in my kitchen. There is something really luxurious and happy about fresh flowers. With the availability of flowers at the grocery store, it is not a huge budget item for me to indulge in this delight.

For some of my friends, they find environmental changes like room fragrance from candles or air fresheners. For others, it is the sound of music playing softly in the background during the work day that anchors them with a sense of individual pleasure.

Sure, much of your life may be dictated by the demands of your job, your family or some other outside force. But find something – maybe a very small thing – to make your environment one of your choosing.

### **Self-Care Strategy #3**

**Tell others how much you appreciate them.** I can hear you respond, “I thought this book was about self-care. Why are you telling me to show others my appreciation?”

I believe in the cycle of love. One of my coaches told me to “Give it out in slices and it will come back in loaves.” I have found that to be sound advice. When you are able to stop for a moment and share with those in your life just how important they are to your every day enjoyment, you will feel the love cycling back to you immediately. This kind of love and appreciation nourishes your soul while it validates others. You will find that this strategy magnifies all of the others.





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## Self-Care Strategy #2

**Be true to your authentic self.** Who are you anyway? I'm not asking what role you play in your profession. I'm not asking if you are a wife, mother, sister, brother. I am asking why you were born. What is authentically your gift to the world? What is your true essence?

Many people require a little help to determine their authentic self. Often, we have never taken the time to ponder this question. Some find the soul search for an authentic self to be a natural occurrence. Others can discover much more with the help of a coach. Whatever method is used, self-care is most effective when you are clear about who you are – authentically. Do whatever is necessary to find that part of you that is unique.

Robert Ringer is quoted as saying, "Because the universe is not a cookie-cutter factory, no two stars are alike, no two snowflakes are alike, and no two human beings are alike." When you try to be someone other than your authentic self, you will experience strife. The best way to care for yourself is to avoid those things that cause you struggle.

## Self-Care Strategy #1

**Every time you sense struggle – STOP!!!** Despite what you may have heard to the contrary, life is meant to be easy. Use any sense of struggle as the universe's way of letting you know that you are trying to control the world around you. Please recognize that you cannot control the world. So, stop for just a moment.

In that moment, observe your emotions, and ask a few questions. Are you trying to control the universe? Can you let go of the outcome of this stressful situation with faith that it will work out all right? Is there a simpler, more peaceful way to approach the situation? Is it time that you stepped back to focus on taking care of yourself?

No matter what you have "on your plate", you can find a small amount of time for total immersion into self care. That time may be as small as one hour per week that someone else watches the kids while you immerse yourself in a tub of bubbles with a single glass of wine. Or it may be something a bit more costly like a manicure, pedicure or a full body massage. Whatever amount of time you set aside for yourself, honor that time. Treat the time designated for self care as a sacred appointment with your soul. Do not let anything distract you, any more than an important appointment with a client



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or boss. It is essential for your physical, mental and psychological health. It should be given a very high priority.

Open your heart to peace of mind and balance. Stop the world that is swirling around you, be still and get your bearings. Listen for a small voice that comes from deep inside. Accept the divine guidance that is available to you at any time that you are willing. Peace is waiting for you. Will you let it become a part of your life?



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### **Meet Kathi Frank, ABR, CRS, LTG, PMN Member Coach Institute**

Kathi Frank is a leading authority on referral based marketing for small businesses and entrepreneurs. Her clients increase their referrals, develop loyal repeat clients, decrease the money spent on advertising and increase the joy of being in business.

Prior to entering the business of coaching, Kathi spent more than 20 years in the real estate field. During that time, she served in many capacities for the Women's Council of Realtors including local chapter President, Texas District Vice-President and several National committees. Frank authored dozens of articles for the national magazine, "Communiqué", as well as several state trade magazines and a monthly newspaper column.

Working for RE/MAX as a self-employed, independent real estate agent, has taught her much about running a successful business. She attended conventions, seminars, read numerous books and hired professional coaches to enhance her business and personal success.

She has recently completed a dynamic book ***The Perfect Source of Business*** that gathers all that she learned about developing a successful, referral-based business. The book uses 52 weekly insights, principles and action steps to transform a small business into a success machine. It is ideal for anyone who wants to focus on growing their business by getting closer to their clients/customers and engaging them in the referral process.

*You may contact Kathi Frank (936) 441-1314  
or by email [Kathi@MagicalBusiness.com](mailto:Kathi@MagicalBusiness.com).*



# Top Coaches Share Their Extreme Self Care Strategies

## Self Care Disciplines by Kimberly Dinsdale

When I was invited to write an article on the topic of Self Care, my skin began to tingle. I have had a phenomenal experience of transformation as a direct result of implementing Self Care Disciplines. Not so long ago, based on my outward appearance and attitude, it would be difficult for anyone to affirm I cared about myself, let alone practiced any form of Self Care. Perhaps most noticeably, I was tipping the scale at 220 pounds. I suffered seriously from plantar fasciitis, inflammation of the plantar fascia, a thin layer of tough tissue supporting the arch of the foot. In my case, this debilitating condition was caused by excessive rapid weight gain. I could barely get out of bed in the mornings and was crashing by 3:00 in the afternoon, then ready to go back to bed at night when my young children did. I was feeling the pain of carpal tunnel. I felt isolated and depressed.

Physically I felt like what I imagined a 90-year-old woman would feel like. To keep moving I abused caffeine and sugar, which only aggravated the pain I was feeling all over my body. What is interesting is that I wasn't in denial of my physical state; I was very well aware of my choices and even knew that I was headed in a downward spiral fast. I knew I had to make some drastic changes. I began to slowly start educating myself on how I wanted to make those changes occur. For four months I read information on a variety of topics, including health and fitness, metabolism, organizing, schedules, structure, parenting, marriage and the list goes on. *Most of what I was reading reminded me of what I already knew, but was not applying in my life.* Some of the information gave me new insights, strategies and encouragement for the changes I knew I needed to make.

Perhaps one of the most powerful experiences that came back to me during this time of processing was remembering a course I had taken several years prior. The focus of the course was appreciating my body and getting comfortable in the skin I was in. This was huge for me, because as I accepted my body just as I was, I could then begin to make changes that were based on a healthy self-love and respect, along with the desire to be healthier, energetic and productive versus self loathing, consistent negative self-talk, and dwelling about how fat and unfit I felt. I began shifting my thinking again, recognizing all the things that were great and working well in my body and extended that to what was great and working in my life. I made physical lists of the positive aspects of all areas of my life. Then I took a look at what I wanted to be different.



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After wrapping my head around what I needed to do, I set the first of the New Year as my target date to begin my process of transformation and implementation of serious Self Care Disciplines. I use the word Discipline because I saw the need for Self Care as critical and crucial to any changes I wanted to make. I was inspired by a timeless book I read during my “getting ready” time. In her book, *Disciplines of a Beautiful Woman*, Anne Ortlund redefined Discipline for me, putting a beautiful new spin on it. I recognized that I would need to develop Self Care routines as *Disciplines* if I were to bring about a transformation in my life. I felt a great sense of freedom in setting up Self Care Disciplines as my own, not something anyone else was imposing on me or forcing me to do. These were my choices. I knew that it was up to me and it would come down to being responsible for my choices if I wanted to see a positive difference in my life. I was discovering that Self Care was any and all ways I was choosing to take care of myself.

And so my plan began. I dug up an old form that a former coach had suggested using: then adapted and formatted it for my use. I call it my Daily Self Care Disciplines Sheet. I selected **ten items** to put on my list and had a box for every day of the month to check off when I completed the task at hand. To begin, I’ll list and explain each Self Care Discipline. Then I’ll share the results I noticed after time. I decided that I would do them and based on results, determine if they were working for me and adjust them as I needed.

The first six Disciplines deal with my physical health and fitness, the last four deal with my emotional health and fitness. The first Discipline on my list and the one I thought would be the most challenging for me was to do **30 minutes of cardio** in the morning before the rest of my family woke up for the day. I joined a simple, very basic and affordable gym and made the elliptical machine my friend. I actually had to start out with 20 minutes and work up to 30 after a few weeks. I eventually took the risk and stepped up on a Stairmaster and lasted a full two minutes my first attempt. I continued to add a minute everyday and worked up to 20 minutes and another ten minutes on the elliptical machines. For inspiration, I found a radio talk show I really enjoyed listening to that I would look forward to hearing during my time at the gym. I was committed to face each early morning (Monday – Friday) one day at a time until the routine became a habit. I remember a couple months into it asking Dave at the gym’s front desk if it ever gets easier. He said something about it not getting easier, but it becoming more and more rewarding. I accepted that staying Disciplined to this Self Care routine was critical if I wanted to reap the rewards he was talking about. The reward I was after was more



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energy and a healthy, strong body. I was soon to discover that there were even more rewards in store.

Another Self Care Discipline that took place in the gym was **100 abdominal crunches**. More than a flat stomach (which seemed like pure fantasy) I wanted to have a strong core. Some may say it was vain, but I found it very important to strengthen and tighten my stomach muscles that seemed to have disintegrated after three pregnancies.

My next Self Care Discipline was to **obsessively drink water**, no less than 100 ounces a day. In his book, *The 10-Minute Energy Solution*, Jon Gordon says,

“The human body is made up of about 70 percent water: not Diet Coke or double lattes. So water is the fuel source you need for increased energy and enhanced health.”

I had been drinking nearly 50 ounces of Pepsi a day and wasn't feeling increased energy or enhanced health. I thought it would be interesting to put his claim to the test and watch how differently my body would respond after replacing Pepsi with twice as much water. I tend to have a touch of OCD tendencies (just ask my husband), so I knew that I could have some fun with this one. I carried a water bottle with me everywhere I went (and used the bathroom at least once an hour!)

**Choose to eat healthy foods** is next on my list. I had successfully followed the Weight Watchers plan years ago, I had watched my mom follow the latest diet craze (and joined her on several), I had read loads of books about healthy eating and was quite familiar with most diet plans and fads out there. I was beyond choosing to eat healthy foods for mere weight loss; I wanted first and foremost to feel better. I looked for ways to make eating choices that didn't stress me out, for foods that felt and tasted good to eat, that nourished my body, more foods that were whole and eliminated those that were processed. Here is a selection from my journal regarding eating and drinking. This was two months into my Self Care Disciplines plan.

*I also am making very healthy eating choices. However, I am **not** starving myself or depriving myself. For Jack's (my husband) birthday we went to a delicious place for dinner. I ordered the luscious and rich pasta and cream sauce with artichokes and grilled chicken. I ate less than half (and was completely satisfied) and was able to enjoy the extra the next day. There was a time when I could have literally licked the plate clean and still had Death by Chocolate for dessert. I*



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*am eating all day long, which since I stay home is easier for me than many other women. I keep (and eat) loads of fresh veggies cut up and in baggies to grab and go. Interesting ones too, red/purple cabbage, jicama, zucchini, and the basic, carrots, broccoli, celery... It takes extra effort to have these foods around, but worth it. I spend more money on fresh berries and none on Pepsi. I really think cutting out Pepsi and replacing it with a ton of water has helped so much too. I only drink water (and a big glass of fresh OJ every morning). I also don't have any garbage in the house. Only ice cream for the kids and Jack (it isn't Ben & Jerry's, so I am not tempted). No cookies, no Twinkie type foods, no chips; the only thing I have in a box is Mac and Cheese – for the kids and other pastas and rice (that I don't miss or care to eat anyway). I also snack on almonds and walnuts.*

Taking **supplements** made my top ten Disciplines list. Because I had read so much about the many benefits, I thought I would see if they made a difference. Some may say I go a bit overboard, however I seemed to find good reasons for everything I choose to take, that it just makes good sense to me. Here is my list in no particular order:

- **L-Lysine**, to aid in the prevention of cold sores that I have been prone to when in the sun or under stress.
- **Cranberry**, to aid in the prevention of UTI's. I have had this twice and that was twice too many. Taking a supplement a day is well worth warding off a chance of getting one again! I love cranberry juice, but the cocktail variety has entirely too much sugar and the 100% natural juice is just too tart for me to enjoy drinking.
- **Iron**, since a complete blood transfusion during my pregnancy with my last child, my iron level has been low, not deficient, but low, so I supplement to avoid anemia.
- **Vitamin C**, I remember so well when I was in the hospital waiting for my son to be born, the nurses were sure to have me take the Iron with Vitamin C to help it better absorb in my system. I continue to follow that advice.
- **Fish Oil and Flax Seed Oil**, I am not a fish lover and so rarely get this in any of the food I eat. I have come to understand how these are both essential and again, like most of these, are easy enough to take that I include them in my supplement regimen.
- **B-12**, to ward off disease and increase energy.
- **Acidophilus**, assists in preventing constipation, yeast infections, mouth sores, colon problems, fungal and bacterial infections, diarrhea, high blood cholesterol, indigestion and malnutrition. Need I say more?



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- **Fiber**, I take plenty of extra fiber capsules a day to support reducing my cholesterol, which has been extremely high since my college years.
- An all around **multi-vitamin**, just to cover any bases not covered by my daily diet and the above supplements. (Remember, I admitted, I have a touch of OCD.)

I take these supplements with the belief that they are good for my body and support my health and wellbeing. It may be that my belief alone has made the difference in the way these supplements positively affect my body versus the actual medicinal effects. Either way, my experience has been positive with the addition of these supplements to my diet. *I must add here that I have been under the care of a medical physician during this entire process to monitor and oversee my progress. I am not a doctor and do not recommend that anyone adopt what works for me, without first consulting your physician.*

The last Discipline dealing with my physical health and fitness may seem trite. I actually have lumped two actions I call **floss and cream**, in this Discipline because I do them both during my “bedtime” routine. I am highly motivated to care for my teeth in this way so to prevent periodontal disease, the treatment for which sounds dreadful! Another reason is recent studies have shown that flossing helps to prevent a heart attack or stroke. Who knew? I apply a creamy lotion all over my skin to keep it moist and healthy. This is also a special ritual of gratitude that my body has carried me through another day

The sixth Self Care Discipline and the first that focuses on my emotional health and fitness, is writing and/or saying **affirmations**. This Discipline is on my list as a way to stay clear about what is true about me and all the aspects of my life. To prevent and ward off negative or worrisome thoughts or self doubt before they begin to creep into my mind or heart, I counter it with truthful affirmations. Practicing affirmations by writing them or saying them (even singing them on some days!) is a way for me to fill my mind with things that are true, good, highly regarded, authentic, compelling, gracious—the best (not the worst), the beautiful (not the ugly), things to praise (not things to complain about).

Writing in a **gratitude journal** is a Discipline I have been benefiting from for years. Writing down five things I am grateful for in my journal every night before I go to sleep results in falling asleep with a smile on my face and true peace in my heart. Even on days when it seems there is just nothing to be grateful for, when I follow through with this Discipline, I am sure to experience a shift in my thinking and my attitude. The





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journals then become precious gifts to me for future reference. I have loved looking back and reading what I have been grateful for in the past.

Often the gratitude journal is like a book of thank you prayers, which leads me to the next Discipline, **prayer**. My experience has been that more than any other Self Care Discipline, the last two produce the most amazing, sometimes subtle, but always amazing results. Starting each day with humility, casting my cares on the Lord, enables me to start the day free of worry. During a conversation he has with God in his book *Humility, True Greatness*, CJ Mahaney shares God's response when he starts his day this way.

*Acknowledge your need for Me! Cast your cares upon me and I will transform you. I'll give you grace when you humble yourself, and I'll make you care free – not responsibility free, but care free. You'll be free from care. You'll instead be characterized by joy and peace.*

I live with joy and peace and free from worry, understanding there is a difference between free from worry and free from responsibility. Along with this attitude of humility, as I go to God in prayer I use an acronym formula I find easy to remember and follow. ACTS stands for adoration, confession, thanksgiving and supplication.

And finally the last Discipline on my list is to spend time each day working on a Bible study or reading encouraging, inspirational material. I have found that stretching my mind in this way has such positive results that I feel lost without the daily time devoted to this discipline. The Bible is the living, breathing Word of God and I am forever finding new applications to my life which challenge and inspire me. There are also loads of great books with biblical views that support ongoing growth, development and transformation. (See my limited resource list at the end of the article).

To wrap up the concept of Discipline from a biblical view, I have chosen a few biblical phrases to share.

***He will die for lack of discipline, led astray by his own great folly*** (NIV).  
The Message translation puts it this way, ***Death is the reward of an undisciplined life; your foolish decisions trap you in a dead end.*** Proverbs 5:23



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***For God did not give us a spirit of timidity, but a spirit of power, of love and of self-discipline*** (NIV) 2 Timothy 1:7

***So I do not run aimlessly; I do not box as one beating the air. But I discipline my body and keep it under control*** (ESV). The same point made in The Message translation is ***I don't know about you, but I'm running hard for the finish line. I'm giving it everything I've got. No sloppy living for me! I'm staying alert and in top condition. I'm not going to get caught napping, telling everyone else all about it and then missing out myself.*** 1 Cor. 9: 26-27

I certainly know how living sloppy, feeling unfocused and certainly not in top condition feels. I also have experienced the opposite. Below is another quote from my journal testifying to the results of my Self Care Disciplines.

*For the first time my wedding ring is actually loose. I feel more alive and energetic than I have in over five years. (Don't get me wrong, I am not jumping off the walls or anything that nutty). I have a long way to go and am encouraged that I am finally on the path to get where I want to be.*

Five months after beginning these Self Care Disciplines I had plenty of positive measurable results. I had reshaped my body from a size 20 to a size 12. I did not have one cold or other illness. All symptoms and pain from the plantar fasciitis and carpal tunnel were **gone**. I also experienced an abundance of positive intangible results. I felt whole, energetic and excited about each day and the future. My self-image had improved significantly. I felt confident to go after my dreams and the calling that I felt God has put me on this earth for. I had removed the barriers that were keeping other people from getting close to me and that were keeping me from getting close to others. I felt better physically, emotionally and spiritually.

I realize there are many Self Care Disciplines that will make a positive difference when added to our day. Some of the Disciplines I listed above have become habits and now no longer need to be on my Discipline list. There are new ones that I have added and even more I will add in the future. Knowing that I can choose to continue this journey of transformation is encouraging. My suggestion for you is to make a list that embraces what you believe will make the difference in your life that you are seeking. If you want to, go ahead and do some research, read books and articles so you will be knowledgeable about the Disciplines you want on your list. Have fun with the process.



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Lastly, find a good coach to support and encourage you as you adopt your new Self Care Disciplines. If you have any comments, questions or concerns or would like more information, contact me at [kimberly@kimberlydinsdale.com](mailto:kimberly@kimberlydinsdale.com). I send you love and support as you live a life of transformation, peace and joy!

Resources:

*Appendix A - Daily Self Care Disciplines Chart*

*Disciplines of a Beautiful Woman*, Anne Ortlund

*When Perfect Isn't Enough: How I Conquered My Fear of the Proverbs 31 Woman*, Nancy Kennedy

*God's Wisdom for a Woman's Life, Timeless Principles for Your Every Need*, Elizabeth George

*The 10-Minute Energy Solution*, Jon Gordon

*Maximizing your Metabolism*, Christopher V. Guerriero

*Humility, True Greatness*, CJ Mahaney

*The Power of a Praying Woman*, Stormie Omartian



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**Meet Kimberly Dinsdale**  
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Greetings! I am Kimberly Dinsdale, Certified Master Christian Life Coach. My passion is working with women. ***I am excited about supporting women in the re-awakening of their dreams and desires!***

***As a coach, my objective is to assist women in finding ways to live life with joy and excitement, alive and inspired.***

I have been involved in numerous organizations and held a variety of leadership roles throughout my education. I hold a bachelor's degree in Communications and am presently pursuing a Masters Degree in Women's Ministries. ***Years of experience in leadership, interpersonal communication, human resources and lay ministry have provided an excellent background for my coaching practice.*** I have spent the last ten years directly working in the personal growth arena. Four of those years I was the area coordinator for an international personal growth and leadership development company. I am certified as a Master Christian Life Coach through the Professional Christian Coaches and Counseling Academy ([www.PCCCA.org](http://www.PCCCA.org)). I am currently a Coach Trainer for PCCCA.

I am married to an inspirational man who shares my enthusiasm for personal growth and development. We have two daughters and a son. We reside in California.

I love to work with women who want to start living up to the potential God created them for, who desire to learn how to live with excitement, inspiration and excellence, who long to be fulfilled and wish to wake up in the morning anticipating what is in store, eager to create a remarkable day.



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## Reclaiming “Me” Time by Laura Rubinstein

### ***Welcome to Your Best Self***

My purpose is to connect with your essential nature and have meaningful dialogues that allow for insight and direction. My vision is for a world of people experiencing extreme joy and deep love in their lives. Is that important to you too? If so, it is essential that you give yourself the care and compassion to become all that you already are.

### *My EXTREME SELF-CARE PHILOSOPHY*

#### **Put Yourself First**

I am **not** one of those people who regularly put others before myself. Yes, read that again. Your first reaction might be “how selfish.” I realize that for many people, especially women, considering putting yourself first may come as a shock to your system. Even though you may feel it’s selfish, my guess is that you’ve probably thought about that being important. I offer my philosophy, ideas and stories as a way of encouraging the integration of the practice of putting yourself first. If you’re concerned about feeling selfish (or being viewed as selfish by others), I invite you to consider that putting yourself first is not selfish rather it is **self-loving**.

When we start loving ourselves more, we feel better, we create positive role models, we have more love to share, we attract more love and an overall healing is put into motion. There is an upward spiral of positive energy that gets created where everyone benefits. Our world needs more positive energy. I implore you to explore the realm of loving yourself more deeply.

Look at it this way, putting yourself first is one of the most important things you can do to be of full service to others. If you are not well taken care of, how well will you do at taking care of others? You would be cheating them out of giving the best of yourself and that is selfish.

If you take good care of yourself, feel great, have enough sleep, get the right nutrition, have enough time for yourself, then when it comes times to serve others, you’ll find yourself in the best shape to give your best. You won’t be resentful, feel guilty, stressed or otherwise distracted. You can give 100% of yourself. Now who wouldn’t want that



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from you? Is putting yourself first important? Is there some form of self-care you can implement now?

### **Know What's Important and Make Choices Accordingly**

In order to integrate self care into your life at a bigger level, it requires that you make some choices. Like I mentioned earlier, I tend to keep a busy schedule. At the same time, I realize that there is only so much activity that I can handle. I will be the first admit I am not perfect. Sometimes I fall into what I call *making life complex syndrome*. Perhaps you too are familiar with this? Making life complex is very easy to do in this rush around, activity filled, internet accessible world.

Simplifying is the real challenge. Because there is so much going on, it is easy for me to get distracted. Knowing this is very powerful. Although, I keep a full schedule, I consciously schedule less than I my natural tendency. I don't like to miss out. That being said, I have decided that it is way more important for me to have **peace, health and fulfillment** in my life than be a part of every social and business function I can possibly squeeze in. Therefore, I make choices to limit the activities and input in my life based upon what's truly important. I limit my television watching. I have several date nights a week with my husband. Yes, I forego a lot of networking opportunities, but I have the love in my life expanding. I realized long ago that having a deeply loving relationship was a top priority. When I started dating, a friend of mine asked me "You are so busy. How do you expect to have time for a man?" Looking at my calendar she was right. My response, however, was, "What you can't see is that most everything that is scheduled in my calendar are short term activities. They can be discontinued (or given up) when I have the opportunity for dating someone I'm interested in spending time with." That's just what happened too. When I met my now husband, he was concerned that I was too busy. He was attracted enough to take his chances and ask me out. Low and behold he discovered that I made time for him. He felt extra special because of that. Many of those other activities were then taken off the calendar or not scheduled. For my own balance, I go to events now and again. They now seem extra special to me.

What's important to you? When you know what is truly important, you can make better choices. Are there any choices you would be willing to make?



# Top Coaches Share Their Extreme Self Care Strategies

## The Importance of Downtime

To know yourself, the distractions of life must be eliminated for periods of time allowing for you to explore your inner world. Some people, especially introverts are very good at downtime to connect within. If you are one of these people, you have an innate tendency to automatically do this. The opportunity for all of us during downtime is to connect to what's going on inside. I believe **every human has an inner wisdom** that is far more powerful than our intellect if we give it some attention and listening. How each person does this is different. Are there some ways you've developed to connect to your inner world?

If you answered no to that question, you may be in an avoidance pattern. You may be utilizing distractions: watching TV, eating, drinking, doing drugs, shopping, gossiping, blaming, criticizing, complaining, extra exercising, worrying, giving extra time to others, planning for the future, spending extra time on the internet, etc. If any of these sound like you, you may be disregarding your inner wisdom. I encourage you to spend some downtime with yourself.

There are several ways I connect to that inner wisdom. I enjoy taking time in the bathtub to just be and ask myself questions. Instead of thinking through the answers, I just let the question linger and see if what insights, ideas or other things come to me. Sometimes I'll ask myself questions like:

- What am I feeling (as opposed to thinking)?
- What am I curious about?
- How can I befriend my fear and embrace my pain?
- Is there something I need?
- Is there something motivating me towards love?
- How can I be more loving?
- What do I need for myself right now?
- What can I acknowledge my self for now?
- Is there a request I can make of someone that would help me?

And those questions will lead to other questions. The questions really are more important than the answers. Self-awareness is the key to self-care. If you don't know what care you need, there will be no way to receive it.



## Top Coaches Share Their Extreme Self Care Strategies

If you lead a busy life, then I recommend taking some downtime; time where you slow your life down enough to go within connect with your

Are these some ways you think might be effective for you to connect within?

### **Self-Care in Less Than A Minute**

You may not realize it but there are things you can do to take care of yourself that take less than a minute. How about right now, close your eyes, take a slow but full breath in and out?

I've downloaded a mindfulness clock that sounds off a Tibetan bowl chime every hour. This is the sound that reminds me to take that full breath. Here's the link to this freeware: <http://www.mindfulnessdc.org/mindfulclock.html>. I offer it in case you find it of use. You might be amazed how nice it is just to stop and take a deep breath in and out. Try it now as you are reading this. See what I mean?

Since I hold self-care in such high priority, I have many small ways that I've incorporated self-loving actions into my life. My husband views some of them as extra work, effort and possibly embarrassing actions. So, my disclaimer is that I realize that they are not for everyone. In fact, if you are like my husband, they may be extra work, feel like a burden and/or cause more stress than less in your life. Therefore, the following list is not recommendations. These are merely ideas for those of you who want help thinking outside of familiar habits and creating your own experience more personal freedom.

- Turn on some music and dance. Just to get the body moving, blood circulating.
- Bounce up and down for a minute (try five). Great for the lymphatic system which is the body's natural detoxification system.
- Meditate for a minute.
- Ask for a change on a menu item so it comes prepared just the way you like it. For example, I will ask for the dressing on the side or extra dressing. My personal favorite request (especially in the winter months) is for hot water with lemon, very warming and cleansing.
- Make an appointment for a massage.
- Give myself a self-massage.
- Take my vitamins. Floss my teeth.





## Top Coaches Share Their Extreme Self Care Strategies

- Sing a song. Especially in the car.
- Take a power nap with one of my hypnosis CDs (visit [www.TransformToday.com](http://www.TransformToday.com)) – ok that's 20 minutes, but who's counting.
- Visualize golden light coming down from the sky like a waterfall through my entire body.
- Go to the restroom when the urge to go first comes upon me. That is honoring my body. Holding it in is rather neglectful.
- Taking 3-5 slow full breaths.
- Drink a glass of purified water.

What would taking a minute of self-care be like for you?

### **Schedule in Self-Care**

Since I tend to live life with a very full schedule, I make it a point to schedule in my self-care. This ensures I am devoting adequate time to my self-care. Once you get in the habit of this, you may see some differences occur in your life. On the one hand, you will feel much better and more available to friends, family, colleagues and clients because you've had enough time for your SELF. If by chance, you get out of the practice of scheduling in your self-care, you may notice, as I do, that you get a little crankier with people. You will begin to see how very important and the difference it makes to take the time for you.

Some of the self-care activities I schedule into my calendar include making appointments with friends to go walking. I know that when I schedule something with another person, I will keep my word. Plus, I am taking care of myself in a number of ways. I am continuing to deepen the relationships I have with these friends. I can work through any challenges I have with them. I can contribute to them and support them if they want. Plus, when women connect, it lowers stress. Do make time (especially if you're a woman) to connect with your friends who are uplifting and supportive of you.

I have designated Thursday evenings as "sacred yoga night." Rarely, do I let anything take the place of that class. I consider it my weekly vacation because the state of mind I find myself in after class is exactly the same state I feel when on vacation. Massage appointments have now become a weekly ritual. I like to do them on Friday afternoon setting the stage for a rejuvenating weekend.



## Top Coaches Share Their Extreme Self Care Strategies

Other things I make time for include a daily yoga 15-minute practice before bedtime. The key is to find out what you enjoy and then put it into your schedule. Add it into your calendar. Give it a specific time and date. You'll be amazed how many more things you do for yourself when you put them in your calendar. It also frees up your mind from having that looming feeling of "I need to figure out when I can...."

- Are there things you'd like to do regularly in the area of self-care?
- When would you like to do these things (start with the in-general time, like mornings or evenings)?
- Is scheduling them in a specific time and date helpful?

### **Working with My Weak Areas**

Everyone has strengths and weaknesses. My philosophy is that life's too short to focus on working on changing myself. After all each of us is born with unique talents and gifts. Doesn't it make sense that we capitalize using our gifts to be of contribution? Therefore, I choose primarily to focus on my strengths and delegate my weaknesses. I do have one caveat... for those weaknesses that are damaging to one's health or true happiness, I do believe they are at least worth looking at and determining if there is some way to utilize natural tendencies to improve in the weak areas.

My personal example is in the area of getting enough sleep. I love to stay up at night. I have designed my schedule such that I start my first client at 9:00 am and rarely any earlier. I have learned that 8-10 hours of rest per day is best for my health. Going to bed by 11:00 pm historically has been a challenge for me. Here's how I designed in a way to use my natural tendencies to improve my likelihood of going to bed around 11:00 pm most nights.

First, I married a guy whose bedtime is 10:30 pm. Just so you know, that's not the reason I married him. I recently determined, however, that this characteristic of my husband can be a huge advantage to supporting me in getting more rest. When my husband gets into bed to read, I have decided that's my signal to wrap up my evening. If I want to get in a last smooch, I've got to get there before he falls asleep. I've also recently made a nice ritual of reading some absolutely delightful books (they are very aligned with my passion for living in an authentically powerful feminine life), that are waiting for me on my nightstand. Since my natural tendency is to fall asleep when I read at night, they lure me in and get me to bed at a reasonable time.



## Top Coaches Share Their Extreme Self Care Strategies

Did you know women need on average 10 hours of sleep a night? When was the last time you got that?

- What areas are you challenged in taking care of yourself?
- Are there other natural tendencies you can use to support you in taking care of yourself in these areas?

### ***Understand Your Motivations***

When you understand your desires and underlying motivators, you can design a self-care program that will work for you. There is no reason to “make” yourself do something you are not going to be able to fulfill on a consistent basis. This will only lead to feelings of self-loathing. Developing self-accepting and loving feelings is very important. To do this, one must accept that who you are (foibles and all) is really wonderful and then explore your wonderful and interesting self. This is a topic explored in depth in the *Transform Your Body in the Mental Gym* book.

When you accept yourself and understand your needs, then you can make choices in alignment with yourself that will be sustainable. Otherwise you’ll be miserable. My number one reason for implementing self-care is to bring more joy and happiness into my life. Therefore, it is necessary to design your life around what motivates you. This will ensure maximum satisfaction.

By taking inventory of your life and the circumstances around which you find yourself thriving, you will have the keys to identifying your motivators. Knowing your motivators is something to honor and use for your advantage in successful self-care.

When do you thrive? The answer to this question points directly to your motivations. Here are examples of my answers:

- I thrive when I am bringing forth my knowledge base and sharing it with others who are interested in benefits.
- I thrive when I am personally growing.
- I thrive with people who are compassionate and positive.
- I thrive when I know I can win and I am supported.
- I thrive in intimate relationships of respect, kindness and love.
- I thrive when I can contribute my natural gifts and make a difference for others.



## Top Coaches Share Their Extreme Self Care Strategies

Any time you feel yourself saying "I should..." you need to be very careful. Whose "should" is it? This thing you "should" be could be severely impacting your happiness. I invite you to release the things you "should" do and pursue those you desire to do.

If you're not taking care of yourself to the extent you want to, what's underneath that? You may be operating outside of your true motivators.

Ask yourself the following, to start understanding the self-care that works for you:

- What drives you?
- What's important about self-care to you?
- What can you do to develop a loving relationship with yourself?
- How can you incorporate more of your motivators into what's important?



## Top Coaches Share Their Extreme Self Care Strategies

### ***Define Self-Care for You***

You've read lots about how self-care works for me and others. You've taken a look at your motivators. You've begun thinking about what's important. Now you are ready to define what self-care means to you. Take time to explore this. Let this page be your writing about self-care.

My Definition of Self-Care

My Reasons for implementing self-care

What areas of my life is it important to add more self-care?

What types of self-care would I implement IDEALLY?

The changes I want to make are?

Where is it realistic to start?



## Top Coaches Share Their Extreme Self Care Strategies

### **When to Go EXTREME**

I rarely recommend extreme measures on anything. I prefer subtle changes that have significant impact. That being said, there are times that going extreme make sense.

1. **When you've gone extremely neglectful.** If your body is in pain, your mood is declining rapidly, you are burnt out, then you are being signaled in big ways, to STOP and change course immediately. Start self-care immediately and do the things that will bring forth the most healing and greatest sense of well being the quickest. An extreme self-care regimen might look like: Get a massage everyday for a week. Start juicing. Eliminate sugar. Get 10 hours of sleep each night.
2. **When you need to create new habit.** Perhaps you have had it. You are tired of repeating habits that sabotage your energy, vitality, success and health. Do what Tony Robbins calls a pattern interrupt. That simply means do something different. Break the pattern. Say something positive instead of negative. Jump up and down instead of sitting. Get out of town. Do a retreat. Visit a friend with a radically positive point of view. In effect, you want to press the "reset" button on your brain to align with where you want to go.
3. **When you want to see results in reduced stress and improved health.** Time is of the essences so to speak with our bodies. Stress causes the release of cortisol in the body. Cortisol causes added weight gain and increase in blood pressure. When you are in a pattern of creating more cortisol your well being is in danger. Take action now. See your doctor and any other health care practitioners you trust.
4. **When you want your life to work like a finely tuned engine.** If you realize that when you have your health and feel great, then putting in place an extreme self-care program is important. When you do, you will find your life works, success is simple, clarity is present and your personal happiness escalates along with everyone else's around you. If you're ready to have life work for you and others, put yourself first. It's like a natural law of physics. By now you've seen that self-care is the most compassionate thing you can do for yourself and others.

**Can you imagine a world where, everyone is taking care of themselves well?**  
Please join me in stepping into giving yourself everything you need to feel great and watch the world transform.



# Top Coaches Share Their Extreme Self Care Strategies

## ***Working It into Your Life***

Start somewhere. Start now. Take a nice deep breath in. Take a moment to contemplate your self care. Visualize yourself doing or receiving the self-care you want. Notice how you feel. Notice how you look. Notice what sounds you hear. Immerse yourself in this visualization for several minutes.

If you're a planner, create a plan. List out the self-care actions you want to put in your schedule. List out what has to be deleted from your schedule if it's already full. Yep, you've got to consider what has to go. Is it very self-caring to add more into your schedule if it's already full? Notice the extra commitments you can decline, chores you can delegate or remove from your life. You may get creative and hire someone, reorganize your life in some way that some are not necessary. Identify any extra work you make for yourself that if it didn't get done, you wouldn't notice. Then put the self care items in a specific time and date in your calendar and delete the items you can remove.

## ***Recommendations***

- ✓ Get allies in your health.  
Find good health care practitioners. Sometimes they might be complimentary medicine practitioners. Ask all your friends and colleagues who they trust and why. I have two wonderful chiropractors, a holistic MD, a massage therapist and a personal trainer. In the wings I keep my acupuncturist and homeopath and therapist.
- ✓ Get allies in your work.  
Find coaches that are a good fit for you. This is your opportunity to have someone dedicated to supporting you in identifying your strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and challenges so that you can develop awareness, purpose, well-being and results. Delegate your weaknesses. Amplify your strengths. Say no to anything that doesn't align or adds more to your plate.
- ✓ Find a self-care mentor.  
Who do you know who takes really good care of themselves? What do they do? Who helps them out? Pick their brain and spend some time with them.
- ✓ Develop close friendships.



## Top Coaches Share Their Extreme Self Care Strategies

When you have people you can open up to, you have a sense of being nurtured. I'm not talking about people to dump on, rather people to share. If you have something stressful to share, let them know you need a few minutes just to vent..

### **Summary of Self-Care Resources**

- Coaching and Advice Blog: <http://www.AskCoachLaura.com>
- Mindfulness Clock. This is freeware: <http://www.mindfulnessdc.org/mindfulclock.html>
- **Transform Your Body in The Mental Gym** book and **90-Day Body Transformation Program**: [www.TransformYourBody.com](http://www.TransformYourBody.com)
- Hypnosis CDs: Release Stress and Create Success: <http://www.TransformToday.com>
- Women's Virtual Support Group. Club Joy: [www.WomenInJoy.com](http://www.WomenInJoy.com)
- Book on Identifying Motivations: **Who Am I? The 16 Basic Desires That Motivate Our Actions and Define Our Personalities** by Steven Reiss, PhD

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## Top Coaches Share Their Extreme Self Care Strategies



### **About Laura Rubinstein, CHt**

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Laura Rubinstein is a Success Coach, Hypnotherapist, WomenInJoy.com Community Founder and Marketing Consultant. She works with business owners and women to create more profits, more connections and more clarity and focus. Laura has been in business for herself for over fifteen years specializing in business development for small business owners across the US and Canada. Additionally her six years in corporate management, extensive coach training and study with marketing and relationship gurus helped Laura to develop her true gift... coaching people in aligning their passions with their work and attaining goals.

In addition to working with private clients, Laura facilitates a variety of life changing programs including **Become A Man Magnet in 3 Simple Steps** and **Creating Juicier Relationships-Journey to Feminine Power** workshops. She is the author of **Transform Your Body In The Mental Gym™**, the **90-Day Body Transformation Program** and **Feminine Power Cards**.

Laura is dedicated to inspiring people to live their lives authentically with power, passion and fulfillment. Early training includes her earning an engineering degree from Vanderbilt University. Laura combines analytical skills, interpersonal wisdom and creative problem solving abilities to make her workshops, coaching and hypnosis programs highly effective. Working with Laura is journey to unleashing your authentic power and creating a life filled with harmonious relationships, true success and more joy.

Laura can be reached at [Coach@TransformToday.com](mailto:Coach@TransformToday.com) if you want to:

- Align your work with your passion,
- Transform your body and/or
- Tap into your feminine power and create great relationships



## Top Coaches Share Their Extreme Self Care Strategies

### **Extreme Self Care is the practice of fully committing to a nurturing lifestyle by Lori Smith**

Extreme Self Care requires connecting with yourself on a DAILY basis, deciding what you need and then following through to make it happen.

You will find in this work book a plethora of ideas and actions that you can use to start your new lifestyle. As you allow yourself, you will develop your own personal touch and style, ideas will come to you like a waterfall of pure energy.

I highly recommend that you make a deal with yourself to commit fully to creating an Extreme Self Care Lifestyle.

As with any good plan, starting with baby steps is the best way to make forward progress. Changing your lifestyle is no easy task and as much as this is all about lightening and enlightening your life, I understand that any change even the small stuff can sometimes be difficult. I am here to support you along the way!

I feel there are 5 critical steps along the path to successfully creating an extreme self care lifestyle. There are many, many ways to move through each step.

**First**, Daily habits, these are very easy and only take 5-30 minutes each day. They get us in touch with our true authentic selves; they allow us to find our souls passions and paths.

**Second**, Stress Elimination, for many of us we are so caught up in the daily stress of work and life that we do not feel capable of a spare minute let alone a moment of peace and quiet. The small quiet voice can not be heard until we sit still in silence.

**Third**, Spiritual wellbeing, even if you are not a spiritual person, you must take care of your spirit, participating in meaningful activities that speak to your values and passions, allows us to stand in our own light.



## Top Coaches Share Their Extreme Self Care Strategies

**Fourth**, Extreme Pleasure, we all need something to look forward to, what do you consider extreme pleasure? Me, I think of a hotel room with a Jacuzzi tub, with candles and great music all to myself. Oh don't forget the triple chocolate cake order from room service.

**Fifth**, Support System, you don't need to move through this alone, creating support systems around you will make the transition easier. A coach can help you clarify your end goal and assist you with staying focused as you move toward the goal. A coach will hold your vision for you while you make the changes required.

Today we are starting on the Daily habits, these are very easy baby steps will ease your mind and your heart and create a very small piece of peace and serenity in your life.

I highly recommend and participate in these activities every day! These are very easy to incorporate into your everyday lifestyle once you have made the decision to do so.

Keep in mind that it will take 4-8 weeks to develop these into habits that you will start coming naturally to you. So for the next 8 weeks, you will need to commitment to these actions. If one day you do great and the next day you do awful, it doesn't matter, start the next day with renewed commitment and have a great day.

Above all else remember that this is for you! Because you want to feel better about yourself, you want to feel healthier, you want to have more energy, you want to enjoy each day of your life to the fullest.



## Top Coaches Share Their Extreme Self Care Strategies

### ***Nourishing Morning Ritual – Nourishing to your soul and body.***

Some simple things that help, pick an alarm clock that has a nice sound or use the radio so that you wake up to music. I give myself a few extra minutes in the morning, this allows me to wake up and stretch my way awake, with out feeling the rush, rush of the day. I have made it a practice to get up with enough time to get myself up, showered and ready before it was necessary to get the kids up.

My morning goes something like this, I spend about 15 minutes laying in bed just letting myself wake up and stretching, you know like cats. I head for the shower, lots of time and lots of hot water, in our house that is definitely a consideration.

Now I have some quiet time, to plan my day, or write in my journal. I do this on in silence, no music, no people and no TV.

It is a very relaxing way to start the day. Now you are saying “just how am I going to do that?” or “My little ones wake up too early to do that”, you’re right, your life is not exactly that same way mine is, and I am lucky right now to have only teenagers in the house, rather than babies.

The point start something... even if the only thing you do is wake up 15 minutes early and drink your juice in silence while you are writing your “To Do” list for the day. And for gosh sake, have a proper breakfast, your body has just spent the last 6 or 8 hours with no incoming food. Now is the time. It is important and matters, because you are important!

At the end of this chapter you will find a Morning Ritual Work Sheet, you can use this to help start your new Morning Ritual or you can create your own.

The Most important aspect to take away from this chapter – Creating a special time to spend with your self is the most important strategy to Extreme Self Care.



## Top Coaches Share Their Extreme Self Care Strategies

### ***My Personal Nourishing Morning Ritual***

I have not always been a morning person, but I made the choice to create that special time for myself and now I couldn't live without.

Here are my strategies for starting my morning in the most wonderful way.

1. **Intention for the Day** (30 Seconds) If you have only 30 seconds in the morning you can accomplish this ritual. Even as you are turning off the alarm, children are jumping on you, your partner is asking where you put their laundry, and you can silently create your intention. And SMILE!
2. **Centering + Meditation + 5 Second Breathing** ( 5 - 60 minutes) You may not be the kind of person that can sit for 30 minutes and meditate, I certainly am not. But I do take the time to do 5 second breathing or visualization of my goals. I like to do a Centering ritual that I learned from a Spiritual teacher many years ago that connects me to the earth and allows me to draw power and energy directly from the earth.
3. **What is working in your life right now?** (5-15 minutes) The first rule of coaching is create a atmosphere of positive feelings to stay in the high level of thinking and feeling. Every day I want to start the day in the highest level of vibrations and great feelings.
4. **Review your Goals and your Inspired Actions** (5-15 mins) Being a "recovering control freak" this is the one thing that I still keep from my old life. My goals have changed now, I strive for a calmer more simplified life, but there are still Inspired Actions that will lead me to the goal. I don't go crazy about deadlines unless something I am doing is effecting or impacting other people. For my self personally I give myself some breathing room, choosing a positive quality experience over a deadline.



## Top Coaches Share Their Extreme Self Care Strategies

### ***My Personal Centering Ritual***

Visualize roots slowly extending from your feet (or other body parts touching the surface). Slowly they travel down, down, until they meet the soil. This is easy if you are outside, if you are not, imagine them traveling down throughout the layers of building, down through the foundation and eventually into the soil. Imagine the feel of the cool, secure soil all around your roots, keeping you safe, taking away all impurities. Imagine the smell of fresh, wholesome earth, as if you were turning over dirt to plant the first seed of spring.

Imagine that you are a giant, primeval redwood (or other tree of your choosing). You are sturdy and confident. You are part of the earth, yet distinct from it.

Your roots go down deep into the earth and all excess "nervous" energy, tension and stress flow down your roots and seep harmlessly into the earth, where the loving earth accepts and is nourished by it. In return the earth sends back calming nutrients, stability, and ancient serenity.

You are an ancient tree, your roots go deep into the ground. You have been here before humans walked this area, you have seen so much. You have seen most of your old comrades die, be struck by lightning, be chopped down to build for the people, but you withstand.

As you stand there, you think about the rings within your mighty trunk. The ones just inside your bark remind you of last spring's rain. The thin inside that of the cold year when you didn't grow so much. Continue to work inward until you reach the center rings, those rings of dark wood at your core that represent the inner you, your heart, your oldest part. Breathe from that part. Suck the air in through all the rings to that central core. Feel your life force gather and recharge in your center. Pull it back from the outermost limbs where the growth may be unbalanced. Feel the sap brimming in your core.

Once you feel totally charged, let it go and it will course through you, back out energizing you, but at your center is still the central heart of your energy, calm, full and ready for anything.



## Top Coaches Share Their Extreme Self Care Strategies

### ***My Personal Meditation Ritual***

Sit in a comfortable position, either in a chair or on the floor, with your back and head straight.

You can "warm up" with a couple of deep breaths.

Close your eyes. Breathe through your nose. Focus on your breath -- cool air in, warm air out. If the mind wanders, gently bring it back to the breath. That's it. Start with a 5-10 minute meditation and work your way up to 15, 20, 30 minutes or more.

A variation that may make things a little easier at the beginning is to count your breaths. Count up to four and then repeat, over and over. You can add an "and" between counts to fill up the space between breaths. It goes like this: inhale (1) - exhale (and) - inhale (2) - exhale (and)...and so on up to four.

### ***My Personal Breathing Ritual***

Close your eyes and observe how you breathe.

Is your breath caught up in your chest or does it go deep down into your abdomen?

### **Practice Exercise**

1. Lie on the ground or sit in a position where your spine is straight.
2. Tense all the muscles in your body completely as you inhale.

Concentrate on the tension and hold tight for eight to ten seconds. Gradually let the muscles go as you exhale and feel the contrast. Try to let go and relax totally. Repeat two to three times.

3. Exhale completely.
4. To check whether you are breathing into your lower abdomen, place one hand on your chest and the other on the abdomen below the navel.
5. Inhale and see which hand moves the most. If your breathing is efficient, the lower hand should move the most.



## Top Coaches Share Their Extreme Self Care Strategies

To ensure that you have understood lower abdominal breathing:

6. Inhale very, very slowly, allowing the breath to enter effortlessly through your nose. At the same time, push out your abdomen as though you were blowing up a balloon in your belly. Move your chest as little as possible.

7. After your abdomen is stretched, expand your chest with air. This fills up the middle part of your lungs. Hold the breath for about five seconds and then slowly begin to exhale. As you do so, let your abdomen fall and relax.

Repeat this for twenty breaths. Focus your attention on the movement of your abdomen as you inhale and exhale.

As you continue to do this regularly, you will have to put less effort into expanding your abdomen — your breath will do that for you. After a while, lower abdominal breathing will become second nature. If you practice it each day while lying down, it will become easier to do it even when going about routine tasks in the house, at work, or in the street.

Become aware of when your breath gets caught up in your chest. When this happens, consciously drop your shoulders and place a hand on your lower abdomen, and breathe into this area, allowing your abdomen to expand. Then exhale, with a feeling of letting go.

### **9 Minutes To Sanity**

Sometimes in this busy life it happens a day that you can't fit in your usual 30-60 minutes of Morning Rituals. Well what do you do then?

Here is an idea that can get you through the busy days still feeling that you have prepared yourself for the day ahead. This is my **Quick Morning Ritual** (and I really do get up at this time).

It is 5:25am... on a crisp January morning. The window open slightly so that you can smell the clean, freshness of the morning air. A small breeze makes it way into the room. You are still under the warm, cozy, comfy down-filled blankets, snuggled to your loving partner.

It is 5:30am... you reach over and hit the snooze button, not wanting to move just yet, your partner snuggles a little closer. You now have 9 precious minutes.... do you go back to sleep or do you use them wisely to start your day on a most amazing high.





## Top Coaches Share Their Extreme Self Care Strategies

Maybe you don't live in an area that has cold mornings, maybe your area is warm sun filled mornings. The intention of "9 minutes to Sanity" is that you take advantage of those 9 minutes after you hit the snooze button and when the alarm rings for the second time.

Yes, I know you do it! Everyone does it! Maybe not every morning, but some mornings. I do it especially on those cold mornings when it is much nicer to snuggle with my honey then to get up and hit the shower. This is actually when I was thinking about this, I was thinking about just how great it was to have my partner beside me...

Three Simple Steps to "9 Minutes to Sanity"

### **5:30 - 5:32 - Gratefulness**

3 short minutes to thank your higher source of power for everything that brings you happiness.

Your nice warm bed, your loving spouse, your children, your grandchildren, your career, your home, your friends, your family the list can go on and on.

### **5:33-5:35 - Intention**

Setting your intention for the day is like writing your own movie script. You are setting the stage for how your day is going to go. All positive aspects start with a simple overriding thought.

"In an easy relaxed manner, in a healthy positive way, each and every action will bring me one step closer to my goals. My intention for today is that the day is positively charged, all my tasks are completed in an easy relaxed manner. All interactions with clients and co-workers is for my highest good." You get the idea, this can be whatever you want it to be and it should most definitely be a positive statement.

### **5:36-5:39 - Breathing**

Simply and Easy. Concentrate on slowing breathing in slowing counting to 5, slowing breathing out slowing counting to 5. Keep doing this until the alarm goes off.

By the time you have followed these exercises, you will be more than willing to get out of bed and start the day. Kiss your partner, and jump out of bed to start your most amazing day!



## Top Coaches Share Their Extreme Self Care Strategies



### Meet Lori Smith

Lori Smith is a Professional Coach, IT Project Manager and founder of Foundation Coaching Group: Career LifeStyle Coaching.

[www.Extreme-Self-Care.com](http://www.Extreme-Self-Care.com)

[www.Foundationcoachin.com](http://www.Foundationcoachin.com)

[www.lorilynnsmith.com](http://www.lorilynnsmith.com)

She shares what she learned after 9 years in the IT Service Desk support arena. Where she started as a help desk analyst and worked her way up to be a Technical Team Lead. She shares her knowledge and experience of both being in the trenches and being a tortured Mid-manager stuck in the middle of Head Office and employees. She shares her experience of breaking free of the old Corp world and following her true passion.

Lori assist leaders, mentors, & trainers create more time and more energy through Extreme Self Care. By creating environments that support the 4 core areas of our lives: Relationships, Health, Spirituality, and Careers, we can create balance. Systems allow us to move through day-to-day tasks in an easy relaxed manner creating time. Extreme Self Care allows us to focus on our own re-vitalization which creates more energy.



## Top Coaches Share Their Extreme Self Care Strategies

### The Power of a Breath by Nancy Heimstra

As I move through my days and think about my extreme self-care, I realize it comes down to one thing first, and that is taking a deep breath.

I work full time in a job I truly enjoy at the same time as building my coaching business and I also live with my mother. My life becomes one of balancing work, family, play and marketing. I know I am stressing when I feel the tension in my abdomen. It is my signal to stop everything at that moment and take a deep breath, and then pause a moment and take another deep breath. Then I ask myself what I need. Am I in a hurry, am I hungry, am I tired? What is weighing me down and causing the stress I am feeling?

The one act of breathing immediately centers and grounds me. I am instantly in touch with what I am feeling and what I need. It calms me and creates a space of going inward to ask my authentic self what it is that I am really seeking. I spend the time there to listen for the answer that comes up. By taking deep breaths it reminds me to take care of me. It reassures me that there is nothing more important at this moment than to listen to my inner voice, for it has the wisdom to know. It has the power to stop the stress, the hurry, and the confusion. It connects me with my own power that I am forgetting at the moment of stress.

The answers that I get vary, but some of them are:

- Stop the action for a while and take a walk outdoors.
- Listen to one of my favorite meditations or tapes.
- Remember to laugh and not take life so seriously.
- Call a friend and share my day with them and see how they are doing.
- Call my grandchildren and listen to their precious little voices.
- Remind myself to play.
- Take a drive to the beach and watch the waves.

When I am at work and don't have the opportunity to do any of the things listed above, I just breathe and take a few moments to recharge and be present and know that everything will get done and there is no reason to stress.



## **Top Coaches Share Their Extreme Self Care Strategies**

I get away from my desk and take a walk down the hallway.  
The next time you are stressing, worrying, hurrying or letting life get you down, just remember to breathe! That's it. Stop for a moment, take a deep breath, pause and take another one and just ask what it is you need right now. You will connect with your true needs as you allow the answers to guide you.



## Top Coaches Share Their Extreme Self Care Strategies



### Meet Nancy Heimstra

Nancy Heimstra is a Certified Comprehensive Life Coach. She is a mentor for the Coach Institute. She is also a speaker and author. Her book, **101 Great Ways to Improve Your Life**, in which she is a co-author with such luminaries as Byron Katie will be released in February.

Her websites are:

[www.newneuralnets.com](http://www.newneuralnets.com)

[www.sensitivesouls.com](http://www.sensitivesouls.com)

[www.authenticlivingnow.com](http://www.authenticlivingnow.com)

Nancy loves working with women who are ready to live their life on their own terms. They are ready to take bold action and color their life outside the lines. Call her now for a free conditional consultation at 949-595-4341.



## **Top Coaches Share Their Extreme Self Care Strategies**

### **Extreme Self-Care Strategy, Energy and Emotional Management A Secret to Having It All by Sharon Wilson**

When I was asked to offer my suggestions for extreme self-care strategies, I did what I feel is the most important extreme self-care strategy; I consulted my own inner guidance! Then I was guided to what would be most valuable for me to share with you.

Making a connection with your inner guidance and learning the process that we teach in our Empowered Spiritual Life Coach program is, to me, a top extreme self-care strategy because it is the foundation for all other strategies to be effective and produce lasting results.

I do believe that rejuvenating your body and spirit by attending spiritual retreats, like the ones we offer at Coaching From Spirit, is extremely valuable. Taking time to care for your spirit and mind is all a part of the formula to attract more of what you want.

But by learning how to manage both your energy and emotions you will be amazed at the changes you can make on the inside which will then inspire you to put many of the strategies in this book into action.

By becoming aware of the emotions, thoughts, feelings and beliefs that trigger us, we will then learn to detangle the energy, clear and release these patterns, become aware of the contrast in our body and emotions, and build momentum that enables us to be more powerfully in the present moment.

This is where our true power lies – the present moment – no longer in a reactive and responsive mode – rather a creative and proactive one.



## Top Coaches Share Their Extreme Self Care Strategies

*"Emotions are the next frontier to be understood and conquered. To manage our emotions is not to drug them or suppress them, but to understand them so that we can intelligently direct our emotional energies and intentions...It's time for human beings to grow up emotionally, to mature into emotionally managed and responsible citizens. No magic pill will do it."*

~ Doc Childre, HeartMath Discovery Program

### *Understanding and assessing energy*

#### **Energy and Emotional Management is the KEY to transformation!**

**One of the first steps** in creating something new is to first come to awareness that we want to make some vibrational changes and that we are willing to take baby steps to achieve this. We also want to remember that we are eternal beings, and as the teacher Abraham says: *"You never get it wrong and you never get it done, and you can't ever get it wrong since you never get it done."* So, there is always the next moment. Take what I share of my own experience that resonates with you, and toss out what does not fit!

You who are reading this are ready to start a NEW life, a new business, a new relationship with your world and a new relationship, in many ways, with yourselves so that you are able to experience more trust and more ease.

I want to share with you some of the ways I have found that are very useful in activating new patterns.

The patterns we have, that are not serving us in our life, in our business, in our relationships, are patterns that have become repetitious. Part of making those shifts is taking consistent steps each day to raise your vibrations. I am going to share with you some suggestions of how you can begin to create a whole new energy pattern.



## Top Coaches Share Their Extreme Self Care Strategies

You may have your own practices, but I want to encourage you to try these. You will feel a greater sense of ease and a greater sense of peace as you move toward your vision by using these techniques.

### *Changing your vibrational output*

Let's begin to start changing your vibrational output based on how you perceive situations and the questions you ask of yourself and others.

There is a great book by Kurt Wright entitled, "*Breaking the Rules*". It illustrates in simple terms why we need to move our focus from what is not working to why it has not worked, to what IS working. You will find much value in reading this book.

As human beings we tend to look at what is not working. That is the first place we all go. Kurt explains that when you are in that place of focusing on what is not working, we literally cannot access the part of our brains that have solutions for us!

We also know that our thoughts are like radio transmissions. So, if we want to affect the kind of transmissions we are sending out, and therefore what is showing up, we need to make changes in those behavior patterns related to how we look at situations.

We offer you the five-question framework from Kurt's book to use as you are creating any new endeavor, project, etc. Consider these questions:

1. What is working?
2. Why is it working?
3. What is not quite right yet?
4. What would make it more right? How do I want to feel?
5. What is the next action I can take to feel more of the way I want to feel?





## Top Coaches Share Their Extreme Self Care Strategies

This is a powerful way to make a change at an inner level around any experience. Sometimes you will not be able to have access to what is working at that exact moment. You are just not a vibrational match to go there. So, if you feel like you can't go down that road, start from a place that looks at:

1. What don't I want to feel in this current experience?
2. What don't I want and what don't I want to feel?
3. What do I want to feel more of?
4. How can I feel a little bit more of that right now? What action, what thought can I take to move me up the vibrational scale just a little bit?

As you do this process, your whole point of attraction in that moment changes! I call this process "*moving up the vibrational ladder*"! So even just starting this process will begin to help you start to make shifts that you will be consciously focusing on.

**Awareness is KEY – the awareness of the relationship you have now with your business, your partner, your project, etc. and the awareness of where your energy is directed that is not serving you**

Awareness of how you are flowing your energy is a very powerful first step toward integrating the inner and outer elements of creating your business, life, relationship, etc. You can create so much more of what you want more easily by becoming more aware of where your energy is at any point, noticing when you are feeling a sense of lower level vibrations and making small shifts in that energy pattern.



## Top Coaches Share Their Extreme Self Care Strategies

### *Aligning Energy*

Creating the life of your dreams, or a business, or anything else you desire is both an inside and an outside process. It is truly so much easier to attract what you want rather than trying to MAKE it happen or pushing it into place.

If you line up the energy more and focus on the emotional journey first, you will discover that solutions find YOU! People that adore you FIND YOU! Opportunities easily find you!

So let's begin this emotional journey with some powerful energy discipline.

*"Every day, try to re-establish contact with the divine Source so that it may feed your own source, the one that flows within you. Allow this Source to descend first of all into your heart, through love. Whatever happens, whatever bitterness, disappointments or trials you experience, never stop loving, for it is in loving that your heart purifies itself. Then, allow this Source to descend into your intellect, as light. Thanks to this light, you will avoid obstacles and snares; you will discern which path to follow and will advance with confidence. When the divine Source penetrates your soul, it will cause it to expand to the far reaches of the universe. You will merge into the immensity, carrying all beings with you.*

*At last, when you have succeeded in allowing the Source to flow in your heart, your intellect and your soul, it will reunite with the primordial Source, which is your spirit, which is God himself. As a result, you will truly live the divine life, which is all powerful." ~ Omraam Mikhaël Aïvanhov*

**"Nothing external to you has any power over you!" ~ Ralph Waldo Emerson**

### Scripting

Let's begin each day by scripting your day and focusing on the feelings you want to feel in each situation, project, opportunity, and then start looking for the positive evidences that are everywhere for you – such as great meals that delight you, people that support you, bodies that feel great, traffic that clears at the right time, rain that stops just when you need to drive across town, among many other



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examples. Look and feel around in your day and FIND things that are working, feel good, delight you, energize you, or work out for you!

Start to notice all of the things that are working, feeling great, and you will start activating that higher vibration more and more. When you find yourself feeling less than great, don't beat up on yourself, just find the best thought, feeling, or action in that MOMENT, and hold the intention that you are working your way up the vibrational ladder, and be gentle with yourself!

This is one of the KEYS to having all the things you say that you want – the vibrational work is yours – no one can do that for you, and that is so much more powerful than the action journey!

### **Here's an example of a script:**

*Today is a glorious day! I look for things that excite me that are working. I take my attention away from anything that is not serving me. I allow myself to feel better and better. I have great connections with people today. People adore me! They feel so connected to Spirit through our interaction.*

*I easily complete my business project and marketing plan. People are flocking to this new offering – the perfect people are so excited to join this! We touch the hearts of so many, and we feel so good!*

*I feel better about the situation of \_\_\_\_\_. It all works out somehow. I partner with my Spirit today to create millions of dollars for me and all my students and clients. I am a magnet to connection for success, health, joy, love and FUN!!!*

*That this all works out and that I can find the best words to comfort my six year old. I am also grateful for all the loved ones that remain in physical form. So this is a powerful way to activate the attraction mechanism by helping to adjust your vibrational output. Then all day long I will look for EVIDENCE of this day – I WILL find things to be appreciative of, I will search for reasons and opportunities to laugh that is the JOB that is mine. No one can vibrate for me, and I need to take full vibrational responsibility for everything in my experience, and then I am free!*



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This is a short excerpt from my actual script recently. Does it make sense to you? I look over everything I am to do, am worried about, want, am frustrated with, etc., and script the feelings and how I want to feel. I allow myself to move up the vibrational scale a little bit at a time. If I can't feel super happy, I don't try to fake it. My father-in-law passed away and my script on that particular day was that today is easier than yesterday in all I am dealing with, and tomorrow I will feel even better."

So start here. Share your script each day and look for evidences and watch how fast you see great things showing up! Don't discount what seem like small things – they are all part of the vibrational output that is attracting what you desire to you now!

### Other Scripting examples:

- *Today I want to feel a greater sense of ease and flow. I want to feel a sense that everything will work out, and I have plenty of time to do what I want.*
- *I want all my meetings, e-mails and conversations to flow easily and to serve in the highest way for me and the person connected.*
- *I want to experience each moment in its fullness and find the good in each moment – to stop at intervals and truly notice what is working and what I appreciate – to AMP up my vibration even higher.*
- *I want to feel that all the projects that I have are moving forward joyfully and easily, even though I have been out of the office for a few days.*
- *I want to feel more joy, more energy after a very long and emotional weekend.*
- *I want to feel renewed and refreshed!*
- *I want to see and feel and hear wonderful positive evidences for all the people I work with, or at any level are connected to me.*
- *I want to help them AMP up their abilities to attract even more to themselves.*
- *This week I want to make choices about vendors I am considering using that come from a place of ease and connection and offer a true win-win for everyone.*
- *I want to teach amazing and activating classes.*



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- *I want to serve others in ways that feel good for me and for them.*

Note: Often when people begin scripting it begins to look more like wishing and scripting things you want but don't believe you can have yet. Review the examples listed above to assist you in fine-tuning your scripting process.

### **Helpful Scripting Hints:**

It is more helpful vibrationally to take some baby steps in your scripting. Imagine that you live in an apartment and are worried about paying the rent. You would really prefer to live in a mansion. Scripting that you live in a mansion only activates your vibration where it is now – which is not in a mansion – worried about money, feeling a sense of lack, etc.

Something that would serve you better would be to script about how you want to feel (i.e., *"I want to feel like I am moving ahead financially. I want to see more evidences of money coming to me. Today I will look for things to appreciate."*)

You want to feel good when you are scripting. If you don't, or if it feels like an exercise, then you need to make an adjustment to it. When you are vibrationally making a small shift, you will feel more hopeful, and also feel more of a sense of possibilities, or at least some level of increased comfort.

A good thing to do is to look at what is happening that you don't like, or are worried about or very focused on. Each day script it in that day – in the moment – and watch the energy shift from one day to the next.

You can also move issues that bring up negative feelings to a more general script like: *"I allow myself to be a magnet for money. I allow myself to feel more peace about finances. I had a great meeting with "X" and everything worked out so well, she felt happy, etc."*

You will use different words depending where on the vibrational scale you are, and you will see the words changing as your vibration changes. You may start out with a vibration like: *"Today I want to feel less worried,"* then you will find the words amping up to what you want, and finally reflecting that you are feeling happier as the days go by. You keep moving up the vibrational scale. (This is an indication of the vibrational shift happening.)



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### Positive Evidences

You start your scripting from where you are, and you start looking for evidences of what is working. If you are not feeling super energized, focus on how you want to feel, what you need help with, and what you need to activate at a deeper level.

Begin to look for evidences of you having the kind of day you scripted and keep an evidence journal of when you are feeling great, when unexpected things happen that make you smile, what great experiences you are seeing, hearing, feeling, and knowing. You need to focus more on what is working – what is happening that feels good for you – to be more of a vibrational match to all that you are wanting. This is a big part of the work you need to do to have an amazing life and experience all you want flowing to you easily!

As we recognize and shift our inner state of mind (feeling/emotion), we then manifest our true intent. This is a process that focuses on your inner feelings/emotions and ultimately, your beliefs FIRST. If you line up your energy, all the rest will fall into place. The action you are to take will be inspired. The people you attract will want to help you and will love connecting with you! It all is easier when you work at the energy level first!

What is important is how we are vibrating and running our energy on a moment-by-moment basis. Hence, our first goal in this process is to develop the ability to get to a place of higher vibration for the inspired action (next step) to present itself to us.

It is so important for us to understand the concept of both our energy and our energy fields. Once you begin to understand this concept at a cellular level (raising your vibration level) and practice it daily, you will automatically move in the direction of the goal you have already visualized.

You will quickly realize that it doesn't matter to your success how the economy is doing, what is going on in the outside world, or who is doing what. We can all flourish and create the lives we want as long as we begin to awaken these energy principles within ourselves. Once you understand that this process is all about running our energy at a positive high frequency, you will be on your way to seeing tangible changes.



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We are all walking business cards. In other words, our energy fields are our business cards! Whatever we are thinking and feeling are literally being housed in this energy field. By changing what is happening in our energy field, we can change our vibrational point of attraction.

We have a current reality/experience that is directly equal to our beliefs. Whatever the experiences we are having in our business/personal life right now exists because we are holding beliefs that are a vibrational match to them. In order to have the ideal vision that we want, with all the clients, dollars, peace, harmony, etc., we have to be a vibrational match to these higher vibrations.

Imagine it! How exciting! These principles allow us to create any reality we want, at any moment of the day, by changing our energy field, by changing the level of frequency of our beliefs.

In her book, *"Infinite Mind"*, Valerie Hunt explains how she has found a way to confirm the existence of the human energy field, which has given credibility to the idea of vibrational frequency. She indicates in her book that as we raise our vibrational frequency, we are raising our energy fields and impacting what we are attracting to ourselves. Our energy fields interact with other people's energy fields, and as we shift/pivot our energy field, it impacts other people's experience of us. Even our name vibrates differently!

### **Fundamental Points:**

1. We create what we want by managing our energy.
2. No one can vibrate for us.
3. Management of energy is your own work.
4. Lining up (aligning) the energy is a must.
5. Feelings/emotions are the vibrational point of attraction.
6. When we shift our feelings, even a little, to a somewhat higher frequency from the original state, we change our point of attraction and are at that



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moment more of a vibrational match to more easily manifest what we desire.

7. Energy work takes practice.
8. Be mindful of your energy.
9. You are a walking business card, a model of your coaching skills, etc.

*"We cannot tell what may happen to us in the strange medley of life. But we can decide what happens in us - how we can take it, what we do with it - and that is what really counts in the end. How to take the raw stuff of life and make it a thing of worth and beauty - that is the test of living."*

~ Joseph Fort Newton, U.S. biographer & clergyman (1878-1950)





## Top Coaches Share Their Extreme Self Care Strategies



### Meet Sharon Wilson

These are a few of the self-care strategies that I use daily. If you'd like to find out more about these practices or are interested in becoming a spiritual coach yourself or learning the process to coach yourself, please visit my website at: [www.coachingfromspirit.com](http://www.coachingfromspirit.com) or contact me at [Sharon@coachingfromspirit.com](mailto:Sharon@coachingfromspirit.com) or you can call me at: 724-360-0051.

For a year of FREE Spiritual Success Strategies from top teachers and mentors go to [www.coachingfromspirit.com/gift](http://www.coachingfromspirit.com/gift)

Love and JOY!  
Sharon Wilson  
Founder, Coaching From Spirit



## Top Coaches Share Their Extreme Self Care Strategies

### Mindful Grocery Shopping by Suzanne Ledo

Do you know the old adage, “never go grocery shopping when you are hungry”? Of course this is true because obviously if you are hungry you are going to be focused on food and very susceptible to the store’s marketing of calorie-laden junk food.

But we need to take this a step further. To truly be in control of what we are consuming and to fully honor our body’s need for good, wholesome, healthy nourishment, we can learn to treat our food-shopping trips as a spiritual experience. Feeding your body well is the ultimate cornerstone of self-care.

Have you ever gone shopping when you were angry, tired, or rushed? What kinds of food did you buy?

I had my first “mindful shopping” experience when I stopped at the grocery after a yoga class on Sunday morning. I was relaxed, in an almost blissful state. I headed straight for the produce section. It was as though I was drawn to certain fruits and veggies, some that I didn’t normally buy. The smells and colors were tantalizing, and ideas came to me of new dishes I could create. I left that day with a cart full of healthy, fresh, colorful foods, and not a single wheat or sugar product. Normally, rushing through the store after a long day’s work, I might have gotten a couple of fruits and vegetables, but I also would have gotten some bread, snack food, a bottle of wine, and probably a bar of chocolate or some other sweet.

Sometimes it takes a bit of preparation and planning, but it is possible to make time and space to do this on a regular basis.

First, it is a good idea to pick one or two days a month that you will do the bulk of your shopping. Plan if possible a day where you have some time and hopefully are free of distractions. If you have kids, is there someone who can watch them while you shop? Make a list of staples you might need, clean your kitchen countertops and make sure to clear some space in your fridge and pantry so you can easily put everything away when you get home. Most importantly, make sure you have had a good meal before going.



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This exercise is best done at a natural food store like Wild Oats or Whole Foods, but you can easily do it at a regular grocery store with a good produce section. I wouldn't recommend doing this at Wal-Mart, though. In my humble opinion, Wal-Mart is bad for a number of reasons, which I won't go into here, but the main reason is that they are masters of prominently merchandising unhealthy foods throughout the whole store. Most normal supermarkets tend to have the chips, soda, snacks, sugary cereals, etc in the middle aisles. If you stick to the outside perimeter, you tend to avoid these temptations.

Before you leave the house, sit for a few minutes and breathe deeply and slowly. Think of your intention to nourish yourself and your family with good, healthy foods. Imagine yourself feeling full of energy and satisfied after eating a balanced, delicious meal with lots of fresh veggies, good quality protein and whole grains.

As you travel to the store, continue your deep breathing, and ask your body to tell you what it needs. As you arrive in the parking lot, take 3 more deep breaths and feel your body relax. Walk slowly, don't rush. Feel each step; get in touch with your body!

Go first to the produce section. Notice the colors and smells of the wonderful fresh fruits and vegetables. Think of the earth they grew in, the sun and water that nourished them, the people who harvested them, and how they might have gotten to this particular store. Feel your gratitude for how easily you can find good, nourishing food. Even think of how your ancestors had to grow and harvest or hunt for everything they ate. Continue to breathe deeply and focus on the area of your heart and solar plexus (pit of your stomach) and consciously relax the muscles in this area. As you release all your tension, ask your body what it needs, and also ask what your family members need. Don't be afraid to try new things! Ever had Chinese cabbage, leeks, rutabaga or Swiss chard? Try to pick at least one new type of produce each time. Look up a recipe online if you are not sure how to prepare it.

Once you have filled your cart with a bounty of colors and textures in the produce section, head to the meat, fish and poultry section (unless you are a vegetarian, then get thee to the tofu section, LOL) Do the same. What kind of protein do you need? If you are focused on your body you may choose some totally different meats than usual or no meat at all! (This exercise also seems to help you look at your HABITS of consumption – do you ALWAYS tend to buy and prepare the same things?) Look for meats without antibiotics and growth hormones and preferably free-range raised.



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Of course, get whatever else you need, and how about some oatmeal, brown rice, pasta, beans, yogurt, eggs, nuts, olive oil, cheese, and maybe fresh whole grain bread from the bakery. Each person's body needs different foods – if you are in touch with it you will start to crave foods that your body needs rather than what the advertisers tell you you should eat! Also, be sure to read the labels on any prepared food. There are a few things that we should all avoid, mainly high fructose corn syrup (a chemically enhanced sweetener, which raises cholesterol and triglycerides, and affects the liver), hydrogenated oils (trans-fats) and chemical preservatives. These are found in just about any prepared food – bottled salad dressings, breads, sauces, canned soups/vegetables/fruits, snacks, and frozen food. Part of being a mindful shopper is knowing what is in your food. It may take a few extra minutes to read labels, but you will then learn which brands have junk in them and which do not.

When you get home, hopefully you will be inspired to create a delicious healthy meal. Here are some recipes to get you going:

Easy Quick Recipes:

### **Garlic sautéed greens**

1 bunch of greens – chard, collard greens or kale  
2 Tbsp olive oil  
2 cloves garlic  
sprinkle of sea salt and fresh ground pepper to taste

Wash the greens, remove the big stems, roll the big leaves up lengthwise and then slice in thin strips, about ½" wide.

Pour the oil in a large frying pan or wok. Over medium heat, sauté chopped/crushed garlic in the oil for about a minute until it starts to get slightly brown. Then add the greens, toss and continue to sauté for about 3-5 minutes until they are wilted. Makes a wonderful side dish to just about any kind of meat (like the following grilled salmon recipe, mmmmmm) or beans and rice. Serves 2



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### Grilled Salmon

1 lb wild Alaskan salmon fillets, preferably with skin (important – stay away from Atlantic or farm raised – it has a high mercury content)

1 Tbsp extra virgin olive oil

2 cloves garlic, mashed or finely chopped

1 tsp sesame oil

1 Tbsp Dijon mustard

1/4 tsp salt

1/8 tsp fresh ground black pepper

Mix all the oils and seasonings together then spread over the salmon on the side without skin. Marinate for at least one hour in the fridge, then grill for about 10 minutes on a preheated gas grill (turn to high for a few minutes to get the grill really hot, then turn to low) skin down, with the cover closed.

Or, bake at 375 for about 20 minutes. Serves 2-3

### Chicken Curry Salad

1lb chicken breast, cooked and cut in cubes

1 cup plain yogurt

1 tbsp mayonnaise

1 tsp Dijon mustard

3 celery stalks, chopped

1 apple, diced

3 green onions, chopped

1/2 red bell pepper, chopped

2 tsp curry powder

1/2 tsp sea salt, or to taste

Mix the yogurt, mayo, mustard, curry and salt in a small bowl, then toss everything together in a large bowl. Serve with a fresh green salad and pita bread. You can substitute firm tofu for the chicken (first marinate in soy sauce mixed with a little curry to give it extra flavor – add it at the end and gently toss so it doesn't turn to mush) – or substitute cooked diced potatoes to make a great twist on potato salad. Serves 4



## Top Coaches Share Their Extreme Self Care Strategies

### **Veggie Miso Soup**

Miso is a fermented bean paste, which is very good for digestion and healing colds and flu. It gives a nice flavor to soups and homemade salad dressings. You can find it in any Asian market or natural foods store.

- 1 Tbsp peanut or canola oil
- 2 cloves garlic, sliced thin
- 6 cups of water
- 1 tsp fresh grated ginger
- 1 cup sliced mushrooms
- 1 cup julienned carrots (cut in thin strips)
- 3 sliced green onions
- 1 brick of tofu, cut in ¼" cubes
- 3 Tbsp miso paste

Quickly sauté the garlic over medium heat in a large saucepan, then add water and all vegetables. Cook for 5 minutes, add the tofu, cook for another minute, then remove from heat and add the green onions and the miso paste, stirring until it is dissolved. Serve as an appetizer to stir-frys, or as a light meal especially if you are coming down with a cold or flu. I sometimes add rice noodles or bean thread (clear noodles made from mung beans) to make a complete hearty meal. Add soy sauce to taste if it needs salt. Serves 4-6

### **Protein Vitamin Smoothie**

- 4 oz fruit juice
- 4 oz water
- 4 oz plain yogurt
- 1/2 cup fresh or frozen fruit
- 1 scoop or about 50g plain or vanilla whey protein
- 1 tbsp flax seeds
- 1 packet Emergen-C or 1 tsp vitamin C powder



## Top Coaches Share Their Extreme Self Care Strategies

Blend all of the above in a blender until smooth. Great quick healthy breakfast.

\* \* \* \* \*

To savor your food and get the most nutrition out of it, you should also eat mindfully. Many of us used to scarfing down our food. My first real experience with mindful eating was when I went to a weekend retreat at a Buddhist monastery a few years ago. The food was very simple, vegetarian food with few spices. We were to first bless and express our gratitude for the food, the earth and those who harvested it, then eat in silence for at least 20 minutes, simply focusing on the food and the experience of eating it. At my first meal I took a huge bowl of food and doused it with soy sauce. I sat with the monks and nuns and observed how they ate. They were simply in a state of meditation, "at one" with their food.

As I mirrored them I finally began to eat and noticed, first of all that my food was too salty. I chewed slowly and really began to taste it. I also found that in eating this way, I could not finish the portion I had served myself. I would normally eat this much food and more in about 10 minutes, shoveling it in while paying attention to anything else BUT the food.

Needless to say, the following meals I ate there I did not feel the need to add so much sauce, and took much smaller portions – it tasted sooooo good! Vegetable stew, brown rice, noodle stir fry, a piece of fruit for dessert and a lovely green tea sipped slowly afterwards while chatting with some of the monks, nuns and other retreatants.

There is also an interesting side note. On the way home from the retreat (a five hour drive from San Diego to Phoenix) I stopped for some fast food at a place I used to enjoy. I started to eat the burger and fries in the mindful way I had learned... That was an eye-opening experience! As I chewed the hamburger, all I could taste was grease – it did not even taste like meat, and there were huge pieces of gristle – YUCK! The fries tasted like some chemical mixed with rancid frying oil. I ate about 3 bites then got a banana and some trail mix at the next truck stop. Since then, there is only one fast food that I can stomach – and that is In-N-Out Burger, because they use only fresh ingredients – still not the healthiest stuff but it does taste like real food.



## **Top Coaches Share Their Extreme Self Care Strategies**

Of course, here it is very strange for us to eat in silence. Meals are a time for being with others and sharing. But there are a few things we can do to enhance the experience of mindfulness. For many of us, saying grace is a quaint old habit that our grandmother had. But let's take a moment when sitting down to eat and truly be grateful for the food, this gorgeous planet that we have been given to live on, and to remember those who may not have this bounty of food that we have been blessed with.

So take a minute, either in silence, or with a spoken word, to express gratitude. Another thing we can do is to chew our food slowly and thoroughly. Put your fork down between bites. Try to identify the tastes – sweet, salty, sour, etc. Taste the earth in root vegetables, and the sun in your greens. Notice how the food smells! If eating meat, thank the animal that gave its life so you could be nourished. Pay attention to how your body feels. Notice when you feel satisfied and stop eating.

I hope you enjoy this new way of looking at food and shopping. If I can be of assistance, please don't hesitate to contact me to schedule your complimentary initial coaching session. I can help you get and stay on a path of balance and wellness!





## Top Coaches Share Their Extreme Self Care Strategies



### Meet Suzanne Ledo

Suzanne Ledo is a Life Balance Coach, Reiki Master and Intuitive. She helps her clients to find balance in their lives by shedding old, unnecessary baggage; fears, negative beliefs, low self-esteem and attachments to people, habits and situations that no longer serve them. Once these are released, they are able to focus on, choose and manifest the things that are truly important to them; that bring real joy and satisfaction, and to easily let go of the excesses, and set the necessary boundaries for themselves.

She works with people who are ready and willing to make profound and lasting changes, to look inside themselves, live their lives with purpose, passion and meaning, to find and follow their soul's true calling and feel more connected, conscious, alive and full of energy.

She knows exactly which questions to ask to help you find the answers yourself. She listens deeply and provides a safe, sacred, non-judgmental space for you to express your true self. She walks you through exercises and guided meditations that will facilitate healing and release, hone in on your passions and needs and develop your own intuition/internal guidance system. She may suggest simple lifestyle changes and exercises to help you stay focused, balanced and connected on a daily basis. She will cheer you on and gently hold you accountable for your progress.

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## Top Coaches Share Their Extreme Self Care Strategies

### **There's Nothing Selfish about Self-Care! by Terri Levine**

People react in different ways when you tell them about the concept of *extraordinary self care*. Some people aren't even sure what it implies. Some people think they already indulge in extraordinary self care because they eat breakfast every morning. Some folks think any form of extraordinary self care is overly self indulgent and should be avoided at all costs or they'll go straight to hell!

I was speaking with a friend about her feelings that when she took an extraordinary self care day she felt "selfish". This is a common reaction, especially among women, who seem brainwashed into believing they have to "be there" first for spouses, partners, children, family, employers, friends, and so on. Women put themselves at the bottom of the list. By the time they have pleased everyone else, they have run out of hours in the day so there is no time to even think about how they might please themselves. After years of this pattern, you can understand how and why the majority of women have totally forgotten any idea that they might, could or should take time out to spend on themselves. Mind you, it isn't only women who neglect themselves in this manner. Many men also place themselves at the bottom of lists and miss out on valuable self care time.

Anyhow, as my friend and I spoke, it became clear she would take a day for her family, friends, even neighbors and community members to serve them, but when it came to herself, she felt she wasn't entitled to time for herself. Any time.

We finished the conversation and the very next day, I happened by chance upon this wonderful list (see below), which I shared with her. A little time passed and we met up again one day and I asked her how things were going.

She told me that she had placed this list on her bathroom mirror and had been reading it each morning and each evening, and obviously some positive brainwashing had come out of it because she had just scheduled her first extraordinary self care day!

This list of positive affirmations is obviously meant to be shared and so, I hope you will take it to heart as well:

- I Love Myself



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- I listen to what I want and I respond to that want.
- I make my own rules to live by.
- I give myself credit often.
- I surround myself with beauty.
- I create an abundance of friends.
- I nourish myself with only good food.
- I allow myself to have abundance in all ways.
- I reward myself appropriately.
- I trust myself.
- I give myself pleasure in a variety of ways.
- I enjoy the sensations of my body.
- I enjoy sexuality.
- I forgive myself.
- I give myself authority.
- I have fun.
- I talk to myself gently.
- I regard my needs, wants, goals, and welfare as important as anyone else's.

**-Ruth Ross**



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A wonderful spin-off from taking extraordinary self care is that the positive effects propagate and others can also reap the benefits of our personal self care.

I have learned that the more I love myself and take extraordinary self-care, the more time, room and patience I have to deeply love others. My life experience is that love multiplies when I care for me first, and I can only give that which I have to give.

That makes sense, right? If you don't have it, you can't give any away. You have to have it first before you can gift it to others.

So, now we come to the crunch. Do you have a hard time taking extraordinary care of yourself?

Many of my clients tell me that the concept of taking extraordinary self care makes them feel somewhat selfish, and you know what I say? I say, "Yes, ...so?"

Think about this. What is wrong with taking extraordinary care of you? Why not treat yourself the way you deserve to be treated? Why is everyone else on your "list" deserving of your undivided attention and not you? What's so bad or wrong about you that you deserve nothing or the dregs of whatever is left over?

If you accept that other people, with all their hidden or otherwise faults and foibles, are "deserving" – then have the good common sense to put yourself in there with them!

Here are some rituals that I have discovered to help you ease into finding ways to get to the extraordinary self-care place. You don't have to do all of these. You don't have to do any of these. You might come up with other ideas you would prefer to try. But if you haven't got a clue, at least this is a starting point.

- Buy yourself flowers. As many bunches as you want!
- Get up early and have your breakfast outside on a nice day.
- Buy a cozy robe – one of those expensive ones. Go on! You deserve it!
- Enjoy a cup of hot tea or flavored coffee, with your feet up and a magazine.
- Listen to a tape that makes you laugh. Got a favorite comedian?
- Sing. Loudly. Softly. Makes no difference. And off-key is perfectly acceptable!
- Dance. Got two left feet? Do we care? No! Just dance all the more!
- Stay in bed late. Deliberately. Stay there until lunch time even!
- Sit and do nothing for 20 minutes. Nothing! Go on... I dare you!



## Top Coaches Share Their Extreme Self Care Strategies

- Go for a walk. With or without a dog. Take an Ipod or enjoy the quiet.

Yes, I have my own rituals that have developed over the past years. I've experimented and molded my rituals so they fit me perfectly. Every day is now an indulgent extraordinary self care day. Well, almost every day. I do try to indulge myself in some way every day, and then there are whole days in which I do nothing BUT indulge myself. Those are my specific "extraordinary self care days". They are sacred. All my friends and family know about them and respect them. In fact, I've got them doing it, too.

Some of my beloved rituals include:

- Avoiding the news. It's mostly bad or sad and brings me down. Do I need this?
- Reading. I love to read. Anything inspiring, uplifting, amusing, educational...
- Watching the sunrise and/or set. This never fails to move me.
- Listening to my waterfall/fountain in my office. The sound of water is so therapeutic.
- Eating fresh fruits and vegetables. Healthy AND tasty AND cheaper than takeout!
- Having flowers in my office. Hmmm... a beautiful, aromatic indulgence!
- Talking with friends. I'm female. I was born to talk. I prefer to do it with friends.
- Being outdoors every day. Just GOT to have fresh air! And look at the sky!
- Getting a monthly massage. Oh, come on – this needs explanation?!
- Meditation. Don't knock it if you've not tried it. Once you've learned to meditate, you'll never "not" want to meditate regularly. It's the best "off" button we have!

So, what happens when you begin to engage in extraordinary self-care? What can you expect? What should happen? What is supposed to happen? How will you know when you're doing it right? (*No really, I have been asked that question!*)

My clients report that they feel more self-acceptance and learn that self-care comes from and ends with them. They tell me they find their own happiness inside and are able to make decisions that support them. As with most things in life, they realize that they can't rely on someone else to meet these inner needs. It has to come from within ourselves.

For example, another person can say something that gets a certain reaction from us – but it is us that chooses the reaction. You can't make me sad – you can press my buttons but I will choose whether to react sad or not. Understand? You can tell me I'm beautiful and intelligent and smart and the best friend in your entire world. These are lovely sentiments, but I am the one who decides whether to be influenced by them, whether to accept and adopt them into a positive image of myself, or reject them.



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It's much better if I can look at myself in the mirror, smile, and like the person I'm looking at – bad habits, foibles, warts and all. (The warts are just a figure of speech!) When I accept myself like that, then it doesn't matter what you or anyone else thinks of me, does it? I can like myself and like living in my skin regardless of outside influences. And because I feel this way, and have so much "love" and good feelings inside, I have so much then to share with everyone else I meet.

Bitter people share bitterness. Happy, loving people share happiness and love. Do you understand more now? Getting the idea? When you start to take extraordinary care of yourself, you become a happy, loving individual. That is one of the effects.

You can expect to like yourself more. You can expect to lighten up a little. You will find you have more enjoyable interactions with others. Maybe they will notice the difference in you and comment favorably. You will enjoy life more. You will have more enthusiasm and be able to share of yourself more energetically and willingly as opposed to begrudgingly. You will have more energy for work as well as for play. Ultimately, you will look at yourself in the mirror, wink at the person you see there, and ask yourself why it took you so long to include yourself in your life!

For me, it has been the way for me to live my dreams and know what is in my heart. Before I became a Coach, I was frustrated at work, tired, and feeling that I was trapped in a job I hated and a career that took away all my time, leaving no time for family, friends, and life. Now, I realize that my having a career that is a natural extension of who I am, one which I am passionate about; having time to enjoy my family, my friends, my hobbies, and taking the time to take extraordinary care of myself EVERY day, I have created the space to do what I love and love what I do.

Don't get me wrong. It wasn't easy. Not at first. I kept finding excuses. "I can't get to the gym because I have to work all the time". And then because I didn't get to the gym I was tired all the time, and being tired meant I had no energy to get to the gym, so even IF I had the time, I had no energy, and on and on it went. You might be familiar with this story!

Then one day, I woke up and said STOP. I realized that as far as MY life was concerned, it stood to reason that I was most important (and had to be) and not the income I generated or the career I had. I began taking care of just me and saying no to things that didn't feel nourishing to me.



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I realize that many people are faced with the same question of how to make time to care for themselves. I say, if you care about yourself and your family and friends, then you just do it. If you don't care about yourself or others and are only focused on being an income source, I think you are missing the point of being on the planet. Garden gnomes possibly have more life purpose than you! Maybe I'm way off here, but my clients seem to get it.

So, put on your thinking cap. What are your interests? How would you love to be taken care of? How would you really, and I mean *really, really*, want to take care of you? Find your own personal extraordinary care rituals and begin to allow yourself to enjoy life. It is rushing by you. This is not something you can put off, like washing the car. You will only be THIS age, in THIS condition, NOW. Today! Do what you can and should NOW. Tomorrow may be too late. It may never come. It will certainly be too late when you have alienated yourself from family and friends or are lying bedridden in a hospital suffering a stroke, due to years of self-neglect and you CAN'T do anything about it then. Do something about it now, while you can and while you can enjoy it!

To remind you of the lesson I learned of extraordinary self-care, here is an old excerpt from my journal (it dates back to 1999):

3/21/99:

I scheduled one full hour to be alone enjoying fun activities today. When the time came, I was stuck and began to feel that I was selfish because I had calls to return, emails to read, projects, to-dos, etc. I felt guilty enjoying my time. So, I decided to spend the time enjoying the activities with my Dad and giving him some pleasure. I asked him to go to lunch (he was shocked that I was taking time off from my business). We dined slowly and chatted and really enjoyed being together. I didn't feel the guilt because I had given him (and myself) a gift. I guess I felt better because the time was spent with another. I do think it would be fun to treat myself to a meal out of the office each week. Go to a real special place or have lunch in the park. So, why not? Ok, next week I will schedule in that on Friday I will take one and a half (did I write the and a half??) hours off and buy a wonderful lunch and eat it at the park. Wow, I can hardly wait. I guess I really am in control of my life. If I wasn't scheduled to spend this time with Dad today, I would have missed this experience and you can't get them back, this I know. I am going to commit to my life. It is my life and no longer belongs to a corporation or to others. It is my life. YES!



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### Meet Terri Levine

TERRI LEVINE, PhD., MCC is the Founder & President of Comprehensive Coaching U and The Coaching Institute (<http://www.coachinstitute.com/>).

Terri transitioned from senior executive to one of the top professional coaches in the industry. She holds a PhD in Organizational Behavior, a Master of Science, Speech-Language Pathology and Bachelor of Arts, General Studies and is a Professional Certified and Master Certified Coach.

She is the author of bestseller **"Work Yourself Happy"**, **"Coaching for an Extraordinary Life"**, **"Create Your Ideal Body"**, **"Stop Managing, Start Coaching!"**, and her most recent book, **"The**

**Successful Coach"**, co-authored with Dr. Larina Kase and Dr. Joe Vitale. A sought after Public Speaker, she has also been interviewed on radio stations world-wide and appeared on Television as a coaching expert.

Terri has a strong background in Communications, Sales, Marketing and Operations. She coaches professionals, entrepreneurs and companies to experience much greater business, financial and personal success, to grow profitable businesses and restore balance in life.

Terri's ideal clients are people who are ready to unmask their personal selves and create massive personal growth and to change their lives and live their authentic selves and life purpose. People who are ready to break down their habits and patterns and energy fields and old stories and programs and beliefs and see where they come from and how they get in the way of who they are. As Terri says, "I do deep work beyond the average or above average coach as my clients go through very intense work."

She lives in Pennsylvania and when she's not working, she enjoys racing Formula Dodge cars!

You can contact Terri through her website: <http://www.TerriLevine.com>





## Top Coaches Share Their Extreme Self Care Strategies

### **“Get off the cross” by taking care of you first by Tshombe Brown**

If you're reading this, no doubt you are a giver. You are very interesting in helping others in any way you can. The trouble is that all too often people seem to have a hard time taking care of themselves, or putting their own needs first.

Can you relate?

I have been guilty of this one myself. Why is it that some people tend to find it difficult to practice self care?

One reason, from my experience, is that there is just so much to do, and people are depending on me. I sometimes have this nagging belief in the back of my head that to put myself before others would be selfish.

Does similar things come up for you?

Maybe you have a spouse or family or friends to take care of, and so you feel you are too busy with them to take care of your own needs. Or, perhaps you feel that neglecting yourself in the service of others is a way that you feel needed, important, loved.

The problem with this reasoning is that when you take care of everyone else's needs at the expense of your own, what happens is you become overwhelmed, exhausted, frustrated and resentful. Worse, your own health begins to suffer as you continue to put undue stress on yourself. Then, whom are you helping?

Probably most of us have traveled in an airplane at some point. Well, the flight attendants always tell you in the safety and emergency section before takeoff, that in an emergency oxygen masks will descend from their storage place for your use. They also tell you to put yours on first, and only after yours is in place and securely fastened should you then help a child or dependent person secure theirs.

When you think of this, doesn't it make perfect sense? If you don't put your oxygen mask on first and you pass out, neither of you are going to make it.



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By extension really, we must take care of our own needs before we go gallivanting all over creation trying to rescue and take care of everyone else. This little shift in thinking is very important. We really owe it to our family, friends, and loved ones to take good care of ourselves.

We can't be fully available to ourselves or to anyone else – much less, our loved ones -- if we neglect ourselves or neglect our own health in the name of self-sacrifice, as if self-neglect is a sort of martyrdom. It isn't, you know.

There was a co-worker of mine from way back that used to say "Get off the cross. Someone else needs the wood."

Life isn't a stage play. If you're stuck in a rut playing Jesus, now's the time to come down off the cross and begin to practice good – no, *extreme* – self-care.

How do we do that?

### **Extreme self-care begins and ends with breathing**

Did you know that one meaning for the word "inspire" is "breathe in (air); inhale"? Learning how to breathe properly and regularly taking scheduled breathe breaks throughout your day is the gateway to inspiration.

The Latin word for "inspire" is *inspirare*, meaning "'breathe or blow into,' from in- 'into' + spirare 'breathe.' The word was originally used of a divine or supernatural being, in the sense [impart a truth or idea to someone.]"

How often do we think of our breath in spiritual terms? You might say that our breath is godlike, divine, sacred.

I bring this up for reflection because I think most of us have forgotten to breathe. As a result, we're running around like chickens with our heads cut off, oblivious to the fact that we're robbing ourselves of the precious energizing power of our own divine breath.

This may sound strange, but think about it:



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When was the last time you took five or ten minutes to have a breathe break -- a check-in-with-yourself deep breathing break? Maybe some of you used to be smokers (or maybe you still are, God forbid!), and you took those nasty smoke breaks.

How about a breathe break?

Honor yourself, your body, and your *spirit* every day by frequently taking a few moments to stop everything, tune into you, and **just breathe**.

### How to breathe when taking your inspirational breath breaks

When I encourage you to “just breathe,” what I'm talking about is conscious, focused breathing that is part of a comprehensive, strategic break for your body, mind and spirit. Some of you undoubtedly practice various forms of yoga or meditation, both of which very deliberately focus on the miracle of our breath and proper breathing.

I would like to share with you an easy way to begin creating the daily habit of granting yourself strategic breaks throughout your day, several times a day. A lovely woman named Montserrat, whose friends call her Montse, taught this to me.

The breaks are strategic because they are planned that you should take about every 1 1/2 hours. This will become habitual, but in the beginning you might consider setting an alarm or a reminder or something to remind you to do this. Your strategic breaks consist of four parts:

1. Take deep, slow full breaths. Inhale 7; hold 2; exhale 7 or however long you can comfortably do this
2. Change your posture; stretch; get up and walk around a little.
3. Sip some water. You know you are made up of mostly water and most of us walk around in a perpetually dehydrated state. This is not conducive to an inspired and energized state. Make sure you constantly have a bottle of water with you at all times. I try to drink a gallon a day. If you don't like water, do to it whatever you can to make it palatable to you. Add a squeeze of lemon or orange, or try a carbonated or sparkling water. This is so important to the functioning of your



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brain and to your mind.

4. Notice where your focus is. Tune in to yourself and where the tension is in your body. How are you feeling? What's the quality of your energy? What thoughts are going through your head? Have positive things around you that you can pick up and read to inspire you. If you find you are thinking negatively, ask yourself a different question. Our brain is always following orders, so why not control the orders given to your brain through the power of questions?

Easy, don't you think?

For the next 30 days I challenge you to follow this daily breathe break regimen. At the end of the 30 days, you will feel so amazing, so refreshed, and so connected with yourself, you will be compelled to continue the tradition. Remember that no more than 2 hours should elapse before you take your next strategic inspirational break.

By practicing the breathing rituals for just 30 days, you will begin the habit of taking care of you first – practicing extreme self-care. To be sure, by consistently and consciously connecting with your breath – which is your spirit – you open the pathway to experience more of the god, the divine, the sacred in you.



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### Meet Tshombe Brown

Tshombe is owner and chief coach/consultant of Your Signature Coaching and Consulting, where he and his team offer a variety of services "to help others discover and unlock their innate power of inspiration."

As a life and business coach, Tshombe specializes in helping struggling entrepreneurs -- especially real estate agents -- get out of their own way to create the profitable businesses and extraordinary lives they deserve.

Other services he provides include human resources consulting and wedding planning/consultation.

Tshombé enjoys the outdoors and local and regional theatre. He is past human resource columnist for the Whatcom County Business Pulse (now the NW Business Monthly), and he currently serves on the board of the Mt. Baker Chapter of the Society of Human Resource Managers (SHRM). Tshombe is also an adjunct Human Resources Instructor at Bellingham Technical College.

Tshombe currently lives in Bellingham, Washington with his partner, Chad Helder, a published poet who also teaches Writing and English at local community colleges.

Tshombe may be reached on the web at <http://www.yoursignatureconsulting.com>, via e-mail at [tshombe@yoursignatureconsulting.com](mailto:tshombe@yoursignatureconsulting.com) or by phone at 360.527.3200.



## Top Coaches Share Their Extreme Self Care Strategies

### Extreme Self Care by Yasmin Abouelhassan

These words have lots of meanings underneath and what matters most is what it means to each one of us. Lots of people think that we “coaches” have the know-how of everything; thus we should not feel bad, sad, worried or fearful. As coaches they expect us to lead a great life free of problems, pains and tough challenges that meet normal people.

My truth is we “coaches” just happen to be really normal human beings, inside and outside. We have our daily challenges, ups and downs, happiness and sorrows. We feeeeeeel what people feeeeeeel and it does not only hurt but with this pain, there is this tremendous energy that makes us want every person to feeeeeeel the best they can ever feel and to help them conquer whatever feeling that does not help their progress. We “coaches” are committed to applying coaching in our lives if not by self coaching then by having our own coach too. We only know how to deal with our challenges but not how to avoid them. We know, we have to enjoy our life day by day with all its unknowns, mysteries, unexpected events, duties and pleasures too. The only difference is that we chose to use what we faced and still face; what we felt and still feel to help ourselves and others too.

Extreme care for me means as best as I can ever do. To treat myself at least as important as all other important people who share life with me.

I want to share how each person can develop his own extreme self care treatment because this is what I am thinking now. What are the tools that we need to create our own plan??

For me the main challenge is to know myself; what am I composed of? I am composed of hardware and software. My hardware seems easier to handle. My hardware is my body which needs Functional care. And the plan depends on what I want from my hardware system.



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Externally I need to give my body what makes it look as I like and as it appeals to me. I like my body to be well shaped- slightly muscular and most of all functioning. I like to feel the flexibility and endurance of my body throughout my daily activities and I dream to have it last effectively with my life span.

So I am committed to at least 10 minutes home aerobics if I am temporarily unable to join a scheduled outdoor aerobics.

Internally, the extreme care I give my body is by flushing it with water daily, I drink water all the time throughout my day in all seasons.

And functionally, it takes both previous steps besides a good diet. I tried going on special diets but I don't see myself in this manner. I am a sweets lover and it doesn't work for me just to ignore it but instead I take small bites of sweets. I eat everything but I maintain vegetables in my diet. What I quit actually is the coke and this made a difference.

Another dimension for functional care is sleep. The key is to understand how your body works. My body survives with early sleep as well as early wake-ups.

My software system is more complicated. It is composed of 4 dimensions; my mind - my spirit - my emotions - my Space. For each of these systems I learnt through time what it likes, dislikes, what makes it nourish and what turns it off. And the best part is that they are all inter-related as well as inter-dependent at times.

**My mind** likes to work a lot (fails to stop at times till fuming with smoke). It has been with me for years and it has always been the same and since I can't change it, then better utilize it and tame it.

My mind likes to work so I let it work daily. It likes to read, analyze everything; it likes to conclude, likes to expand and grow, likes to investigate and likes to be challenged.

Giving my mind extreme care means giving it the time to talk and share with me. I do this by allowing my mind to take control of my hand and start writing down all what it thinks of. I also allow it to speak out loud with my support group (for me; they are my selected friends, selected family members or my coach).



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I allow my mind to dream and dream and dream and most important enjoy the dream. I allow my mind to take free tours everywhere inside my head or outside it. I give it the freedom to travel away, enjoy the possibility, and even fly away at times. So that it returns back to me, happy, enthusiastic and ready to classify the dreams, seek opportunities and plan for scheduled actions. I allow my mind to change the plans, have flexible time frames as long as it shared with me and we agreed upon the changes.

There are times when my mind refuses my charge over it. It resists obeying. It rebels. At those times I know it needs help from another software system.

The close friend of my mind is my spirit; my spirit has a great influence on my mind. My spirit inspires my mind, ignites my mind's passion and creativity. And my spirit is such a nice gift, it is easier to handle.

**My spirit** is enriched by plenty of various do-able things. My religious daily rituals have a good direct impact on my spirit. It soon flourishes. When I consciously maintain and excel in my religious rituals, my spirit calms down, enjoys the path, gets restored, and contained. It works as my safety valve. It gives me stability.

My spirit loves nature, every bit of it; the sky, clouds, sun, moon, trees, bushes, air, rain, storms, mountains, sand, flowers, rivers, animals, birds, all. My spirit adores interaction between living things all together. The great part is that nature is around us everywhere inside our homes, offices, cars and outside them. All what I do is that I let my spirit realizes nature all the time. My spirit realizes the sun rays when they visit my home, my office, or my car. I allow my spirit to feel them, their warmth, their color, their glow, their reflection, their interaction with clouds. I allow my spirit to recognize the sound of birds, their calling and communicating with each other. I allow my spirit to appreciate and enjoy what my eyes see, my ears hear and my body feels. And in return I feel my spirit glows.

My spirit loves good art, music, songs, drawing, and colors. My spirit loves the human excellence, so I allow it to enjoy when people excel in anything: their work, their talents, their ideas their interaction. My spirit adores the innocence





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of children, their inspection of things, their outgoing manner, their way of thinking, concluding and talking.

By knowing all these things about my spirit, I can sense when it is out of fuel thus I allow it to get immersed in any of these; the easiest and greatest is letting it fully concentrate with my son, in his world, his logic, his enthusiasm. At times I even ask him his opinion about a topic to give my spirit the chance to enjoy his development.

When my spirit glows, my mind relaxes and comes back to me ready to join again as my tool and accepts me being in charge.

**My emotions** make my third software system. This part of me needs further coaching, adjustment and control. My emotions are my giant gene. When it pops up from its lamp, it disturbs my life and creates some chaos. It is rebellious and refuses both my control as well as my mind's control too. However it gets along with the dreaming part of my mind.

To take extreme care of my emotions; I give it the chance to take the lead over my hand and start writing down all what it feels. Those writings are not as organized as those of my mind but they are just ok the way they are.

My emotions floods me with lots of feelings; some from the past some from the present. Taking extreme care of my emotions means letting them out, acknowledge and recognize them with understanding and appreciation.

Writing down might still be not enough; extreme care means to understand that my emotions' gene may also need to be heard out in a secure and safe environment. My part is to carefully select this person whom I now understand that this is my coach.

My emotions' gene pops up in different ways too. At times it takes control of my hand and starts drawing (great gift); sometimes it haunts my body and starts floating with music to set itself free.

It also strives when it gives good care for people whom I care for and love; my family, my friends and of course my coachees. When it is allowed to do so, it



## Top Coaches Share Their Extreme Self Care Strategies

extends its power by even caring for any person I get to know. My emotions make me feel human, makes me feel normal, makes me care more for people, desire to know more about them and my intention to offer them help grows and grows.

My last component is **my space** which has influence on all other software systems. My space when cared for extremely recharges all my powers. It also allows me to invite my other 3 software systems to be its guest so that they will have the freedom to express themselves.

To take extreme care of my space, I allow it to have the time it needs (10 min. can be enough and may extend to one day in intense situations).

Through this time I allow it to enjoy the silence of all my systems, the blankness of thoughts and feelings by immersing it in activities like household activities, playing with kids or reading history or novels.

When I am finished with my space, I feel fresh, good and ready for my next step.

### **My extreme self care system lies in**

1. Defining my self parts
2. Understanding my self parts, what makes them grow and thrive and what keeps them stranded.
3. Handling them by allowing them to expand and glow and giving them the luxuriousness of shrinking at times.
4. Allowing their outrages at times
5. Never make any of them take control over me

Being a coach I understand that I am the one in control of my life and my choices. Whatever I can't change, I will live it through, enjoy feeling it as well as learning from it. No experience goes in vain.



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**Now it your turn: (Take as much space as you need)**

- Defining your self parts and recognizing their interdependence

- Understanding your self parts:

**My Self Part**

**Likes**

**Dislikes**

- Outrageous behaviors of parts of your self

**My Self Part**

**Behavior**





## Top Coaches Share Their Extreme Self Care Strategies



### Meet Yasmin Abouelhassan

Eng. Yasmin Abouelhassan Certified  
Comprehensive Coach President & Founder  
Happy Family Institute

[www.happyfamilyinstitute.org](http://www.happyfamilyinstitute.org)

[www.hfi4u.com](http://www.hfi4u.com)

**Biomedical Engineer** with 12 years  
experience in the *marketing* and sales of  
medical supplies and equipment.

**Expert in building and maintaining  
customer relations.** Extensive qualifications  
in sales and marketing.

**Strong *management* background** with a  
proven ability to create and boost a healthy

team spirit within work team.

And **2 years specific experience as a Certified Comprehensive Coach;**  
coaching individuals and organizations towards their specific goals and  
challenges.

**Founder and president of Happy Family Institute, *the first coaching  
service provider in Egypt.*** Through my job I offer individuals and companies  
coaching services according to their needs.

Through individual life coaching; I coach my clients around communication  
skills, building and maintaining healthy relationships, understanding and  
excelling in their personal and professional lives.

Through Company Coaching I help company management address different  
paths for the achievement of their missions and goals, current situation  
analysis, job analysis, personnel planning and recruiting, personnel follow-up



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and coaching, conducting or advising requested trainings. Through my job, I personally conduct training courses for sales, management, customer service.

For me one of the keys to ultimate happiness is when my clients (whom I really love and sincerely care for) step to successes in their personal and professional lives, when confidence takes its path in their soul, when they commit themselves to taking actions, develop and start their happy journey, I feel deep inside that this is why I existed on earth this is why GOD has created me and this is my destiny to live for.





# **Top Coaches Share Their Extreme Self Care Strategies**

## **Appendix B - Morning Ritual Work Sheet by Lori Smith**

### **Morning Ritual Work Sheet**

- 1. Centering + Meditation + 5 Second Breathing**
- 2. Intention for the Day**
- 3. What is working in your life right now**
- 4. Review your goals and your Inspired Actions**
- 5. I want it because...?**





## **Top Coaches Share Their Extreme Self Care Strategies**

### **Appendix C - Top Coaches Share... Volume 2**

NOW you too can Join in the fun with... Volume 2 in the Top Coaches Shares series...

## **“Top Coaches Share Their Personal Power Strategies”**

For more Information Visit [www.topcoachesshare.com](http://www.topcoachesshare.com)