

GILLIAN
McMICHAEL
TRANSFORMATIONAL EXPERT

Wellness Recovery Plan

Your Journey Starts Here



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Welcome to my Wellness Recovery Plan



Welcome to my 5-Step Wellness Recovery Plan. I am delighted you have chosen to be here. If you follow these 5 simple steps, and practice them daily for the next 30 days, I promise you will feel better about yourself and your life.

Over a 12-month period between the summer of 2009 to 2010, my life started to fall apart, and I felt out of my control. I got divorced, and with that I lost my home and self-esteem. A few months later my business went into liquidation, my car was driven away, and my business of 7 years was gone.

I was overweight, stressed and anxious. All this cumulated with me collapsing in a heap on the floor, not knowing how to feel, what to think and what to do. A number months later I thought I was back on my feet; but sustaining a sense of full wellbeing was not so easy. My road to full recovery took seven years. I knew it would take time but I didn't realise how long it would take for me to feel whole again.

Why I follow these 5-steps

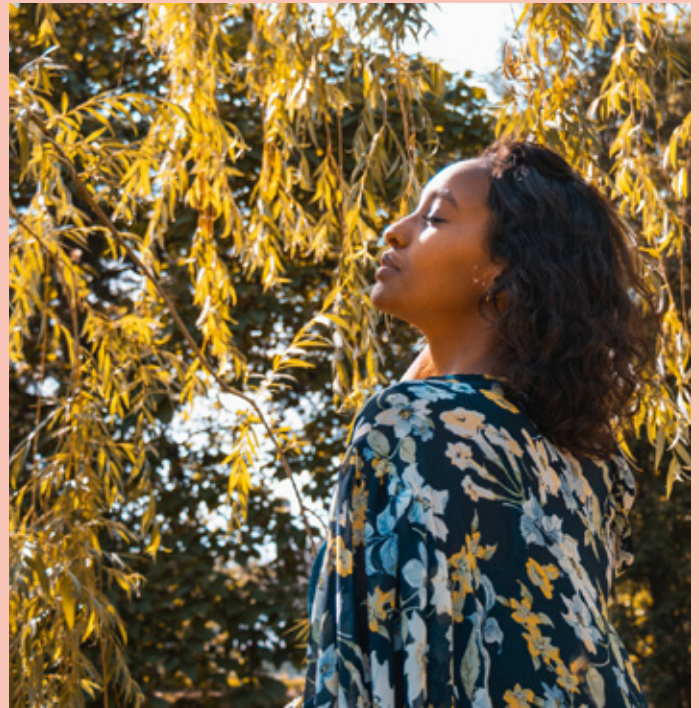


During my time of rebuilding, I invested in my own personal development, I learned how to be kind to myself and over time I created my own self-care plan. This developed into my life routine which I have been following every day since.

I thought I would share this with you, as it may help if you're feeling stuck, lost or even a little overwhelmed with life. If you follow these 5 simple steps, and practice them daily for the next 30 days, I promise you will feel better about yourself and your life.

If you choose to continue beyond the 30 days this daily routine will become your life routine and part of who you are. Negative mindsets, self-limiting beliefs and all the things that are not serving you well will start to disappear, and over time, you will form a new way of being.

Step One – Breathe



Breathing is something we do on a daily basis. The body, in a living state, breathes involuntarily whether we are awake, sleeping, or actively exercising. Breathing is one of the most natural things we do as humans. It is a gift and a very powerful tool that can enable us to create more ease and balance in our lives. Taking time to focus on the breath allows us to pause from daily stresses, physical symptoms, and emotions that have taken over the mind. Breathing is living. It is a vital function of life. It is in that moment where we focus on the breath that we can return to a neutral state of being, gain clarity, feel rejuvenated, and enhance an overall sense of well-being.

These are just a few wonderful reasons to invite a pranayama practice into your daily routine. In yoga, we refer to this as pranayama. Prana is a Sanskrit word that means life force and ayama means extending or stretching. Thus, the word “pranayama” translates to the control of life force.

It is also known as the extension of breath. Every cell in our bodies needs oxygen to function properly. So, it’s no surprise that research shows that a regular practice of controlled breathing can decrease the effects of stress on the body and increase overall physical and mental health.

Ever notice how soothing a simple sigh can be at the end of a long day? There are a variety of breathing techniques that are known to reduce stress, aid in digestion, improve sleep, and cool you down.

So, to do this you need to:

- Each morning, after you have rehydrated (had a full glass of water) find a comfortable seat. Close your eyes and take a big breath in, inhaling through your nose, and exhaling through your nose. The aim is to maintain a natural rhythm.
- Sigh, when you feel like it – let it all out, just make sure those around you don’t think you are sighing at them!
- When feeling a little blocked, or low in energy, take a big inhale into your belly and exhale with your mouth open, letting go of the breath. Do this, three times, and you will free yourself of any negative air you may have been holding onto.

Step Two – Meditate



Regular meditation dissipates accumulated stress and cultivates a state of restful alertness. There are many compelling studies showing the power of meditation to relieve stress and promote inner calm. Those who spend a few hours each week practicing meditation report a significant decrease in job stress, anxiety, and depressed mood. The challenge with meditation is that we each have between 60,000 and 80,000 thoughts a day – unfortunately, many of them are the same thoughts we had yesterday, last week, and last year.

The mind tends to get stuck in repetitive thought loops that squeeze out the possibility for new ideas and inspiration. Meditation is a powerful practice for going beyond habitual, conditioned thought patterns into a state of expanded awareness. In meditation we focus our activity inwards where we can connect to our true self and we open to new insights, intuition, and ideas.

Meditation focuses on the breath, not because there is anything special about it, but because the physical sensation of breathing is always there, and you can use it as an anchor to the present moment. Throughout any practice you may find yourself caught up in thoughts, emotions, sounds—wherever your mind goes, simply come back again to the next breath.

Start with a simple meditation practice:

- Sit comfortably. Find a spot that gives you a stable, solid, comfortable seat.
- Notice what your legs are doing. If on a cushion, cross your legs comfortably in front of you. If on a chair, rest the bottoms of your feet on the floor – its important you are grounded.
- Straighten your upper body – but don't stiffen. Your spine has natural curvature. Let it be there. Loosen your shoulders and relax – we don't want your shoulders up round your ears!
- Notice what your arms are doing. Situate your upper arms parallel to your upper body. Rest the palms of your hands on your legs wherever it feels most natural. Ideally have your palms face upwards again in a relaxed manner.
- Soften your gaze. Drop your chin a little and let your gaze fall gently downward and close your eyes. If this doesn't feel right, then ensure you have a soft focus

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- Feel your breath. Bring your attention to the physical sensation of breathing: the air moving through your nose or mouth, the rising and falling of your belly, or your chest.
- Notice when your mind wanders from your breath. Inevitably, your attention will leave the breath and wander to other places. Don't worry. There's no need to block or eliminate thinking. When you notice your mind wandering gently return your attention to the breath.
- Be kind about your wandering mind. You may find your mind wandering constantly—that's normal, too. Instead of wrestling with your thoughts, practice observing them without reacting. Just sit and pay attention. As hard as it is to maintain, that's all there is. Come back to your breath over and over again, without judgment or expectation.
- When you're ready, gently open your eyes or lift your gaze. Take a moment and notice any sounds in the environment. Notice how your body feels right now. Notice your thoughts and emotions.

Step Three – Sleep



8-hours of restful sleep is what our body needs each night to heal itself. Note I say restful sleep, which means no tossing and turning, your brain kicking into gear when you roll over, getting up to get a drink of water or go to the loo, or sleeping after alcohol.

A restful sleep means finding a routine to down tools, to relax and settle into yourself before switching your bedside light off.

So, to do this you need to:

- Eat no later than 3-hours before you go to sleep – sleeping on a full stomach not only gives you a restless night, but it can cause digestive problems and a build-up of acid.
- Create a nightly routine and stick to it – prepare your bed, have a low voltage bedside lamp, take a few deep connecting breaths to regulate your breathing.
- Lights out by 11pm or in my case 10pm if up by 6am (work backwards and that will tell you what time you should be in bed).
- No screen time on your phone, tablet or laptop at least 30 mins before sleeping.
- Ask for a safe night's sleep such as “please keep me safe while I sleep” this helps you relax knowing you are being looked after while sleeping – try it and see for yourself – it certainly works for me!

Step Four – Exercise



For you to live a long, healthy and happy life in the body you've been given, you have to look after it. It's important that you don't misuse your body or take what you have for granted - you have to make time for self-care. It's important to take care of the whole of you - the physical, the emotional, the mental and the spiritual. You should know when your energy levels are feeling a little depleted and provide yourself with the right amount of self-care, love and compassion.

Life is about giving and receiving and if you're feeling a little unbalanced or your energy levels are low, it may be because you're giving too much of yourself to others and not doing enough for yourself. It is essential that you top up your tank regularly. Without inner strength or resilience, it's unlikely you will ever reach your goals in life because you'll be exhausted.

- Listen to your body, so if you need a high-octane exercise class go for it, if not choose a swim.
- Dance in your kitchen when you feel like it - put on your favourite song and get down and boogie - in my most, darkest moments, dancing helped lift my mood and brought me joy by simply being in the moment and letting go of all the tension I was holding in my body.
- Do some form of exercise every day, if that means walking in your lunch break for 30 mins, or take the stairs rather than the elevator.
- Stretch daily, try if you can to get into the routine of stretching when you first get out of bed. Our limbs stiffen overnight so loosen up and you will feel better about the day ahead.

Step Five – Set your intention for the day



According to the law of attraction what you think and feel shapes your reality. The power of affirmations lies in the ability to transform your external world by first changing your internal one. By drawing attention to how you want to be living your life, you can then set your intention on how that will manifest. What you are doing with an affirmation is calling forth what you want, so the universe can help it manifest.

By calling forth what you want through your affirmation and through your thoughts, feelings and desires, two influences will be activated in your consciousness; attention and intention. So what we are doing here is paying attention to our intention!

You need to choose your own words, but make sure it is a statement and keep it simple as you need to remember it for the full day or even the week if preferred. This can be as simple as “I can do this” or “it will be a great day” or “enjoy the moment”.

These intentions are powerful and will over time re-train your brain to only have positive intentional thoughts that will lead to a lightness within you. Through this process you will begin to notice how different you feel. Opportunities will start to present themselves and when they do, you must show gratitude. Acknowledging and appreciating all these things will only bring a greater sense of well-being.

I hope you find these 5 steps of my wellness recovery plan useful. I would love to hear how you are getting on, so please stay in touch. Remember to form a new routine, it will take you 30 days. But to master it, you need to make it part of your daily practice.

I hope you embrace the plan and enjoy as you discover more about yourself and your wellness.

Let your
journey begin

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opportunity to find out more,
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