

Empowered Living Program



Consultants Notes:

For the next 6 weeks you will require a meeting room large enough to accommodate the group. The room should be scheduled and booked ahead of time with the HR department.

Each week you will also require a lap top, screen and an LCD projector. These items should be scheduled and booked ahead of time with the IT department.

Participant handouts should be distributed at the beginning of each session and in accordance with the current week being taught. Do not distribute the entire program at the first session.

Ask each participant to purchase a small binder to keep all of the program handouts in as well as some lined paper which they will use as their empowerment journal for the duration of the program.

Also suggest that they purchase a book called Life's Greatest Lessons by Hal Urban. Explain that this book will help them to better understand many facets of this program and encourage them to read it.

Begin by explaining to the class what the purpose of the program is:

This program has been developed to help you improve your emotional and physical health.

"I am confident that the information and tools you will acquire over the next 6 weeks will provide you with life changing insights about yourself and others that will ultimately enrich your overall well-being, happiness and success.

You should expect to experience a sense of enlightenment, enhanced awareness and certainty, a clear sense of purpose and direction, improved self-confidence and a positive frame of mind, a boost of emotional and physical energy, and an intensified feeling of happiness and contentment.

Prepare to be empowered!"

At the beginning of the first session briefly go over what will be discussed each week omitting the tasks from your briefing.

Empowered Living Program

Program Outline

Week #1: Empowered Living

- a) Rescue, repair and rejuvenate your life. Avoid adrenal burnout
- b) What does being empowered mean?
- c) Are you thriving or just surviving?
- d) How might your lifestyle habits be affecting your mind and body?

Tasks: Find out what stage of burn out you're in? Complete the adrenal reserve test. Keep the test for future reference in week #6 of this program. Choose a couple of the lifestyle habits you checked off in column B of your handout and practice incorporating the corresponding solutions in column A into your life over the next week.

Week #2: Spiritual Empowerment

- a) Happiness is a choice – Your choice!
- b) Living in the present moment
- c) Awareness

Tasks: Practice becoming aware of when your egoic mind is rearing its ugly head over the next week. Each time you are not living in the “present moment”, thinking about a past one and you immediately feel a need to react with unhappiness, impatience, anger, frustration, pain, hate, fear, blame or any other non-loving response – “STOP” and simply become aware of what you are doing and feeling, this brings you back into the present moment and will allow the negative response/feeling to dissolve.

Week #3: Emotional Empowerment

- a) The power of positive thinking (PNI), self-talk and words of affirmation
- b) Changing our neurotransmitters (re-programming)
- c) Vision boards/success

Tasks: Choose some of the negative self-talk statements you checked off in column B of your handout and practice saying the corresponding positive words of affirmation in column A instead. Create your own personal vision board.

Week #4: Personal Empowerment

- a) Fears and Beliefs
- b) An Attitude of Gratitude
- c) Personal Authenticity - Being true to yourself and others

Task: Write 3 things you are grateful for in your empowerment journal every night this week. Practice being authentic in your words and actions.

Week #5: Physical Empowerment

- a) Balancing your body's Ph levels (alkaline/parasympathetic vs. acidic/sympathetic)
- b) Eating whole foods and avoiding unhealthy stimulants
- c) Engaging in regular moderate exercise vs. under or over exercising

Tasks: Try incorporating deep breathing and a few of the dietary and physical activity habits listed in your handouts into your life this week. Complete the adrenal reserve test again and compare your results to the 1st time you did the test in week #1 of this program. In your empowerment journal write one or two paragraphs about how your score has changed and how that makes you feel.

Week #6: Relationship Empowerment (spouse, children, family, friends and co-workers)

- a. The Five Languages of Love
- b. Letting go of judgments and the past
- c. Altering our dialect to improve communication skills

Tasks: Fill out the love language questionnaire and ask your significant other to do the same. Practice catching people doing things right and start voicing your approval and appreciation of others more often.

Empowered Living Program

Week #1: Empowered Living

Get Ready to Rescue, Repair and Rejuvenate Your Life!

- Emotional health is an essential part of each person's overall well-being. Everyday, we all face challenges that test us and put our emotional and physical health at risk. When our emotional health is poor, it can affect our entire body and play a role in the development of other serious health issues. This process is often referred to as burnout.
- Everyone feels emotionally unstable at times. But prolonged poor emotional health can take its toll on your body. It can make you feel run down, sad, nervous, angry or irritable. It can cause headaches, muscle tension, upset stomach, nausea, dizziness or feelings of despair, and may cause you to eat more or eat less than normal. In the long-term, stress can raise your risk of high cholesterol, heart disease, diabetes and reproductive problems and weaken your body's ability to fight disease. It can also raise your risk of depression, which may in turn contribute to heart disease and diabetes. In addition, poor emotional health can make it harder for you to recover from a heart attack or keep your diabetes in check. So good emotional health is very important.
- The key to living an empowered life is held in how we choose to think, feel, react and respond to life's ups and downs. How we decide to respond can positively or negatively impact our health and our overall well-being. Finding healthy ways to manage life's challenges will improve our emotional and physical health and ultimately our level of happiness.

In Class Task: Direct your participants to the diagram of the body in their handouts. Ask them to circle the physical symptoms they are experiencing.

Empowered Living: What does being empowered mean?

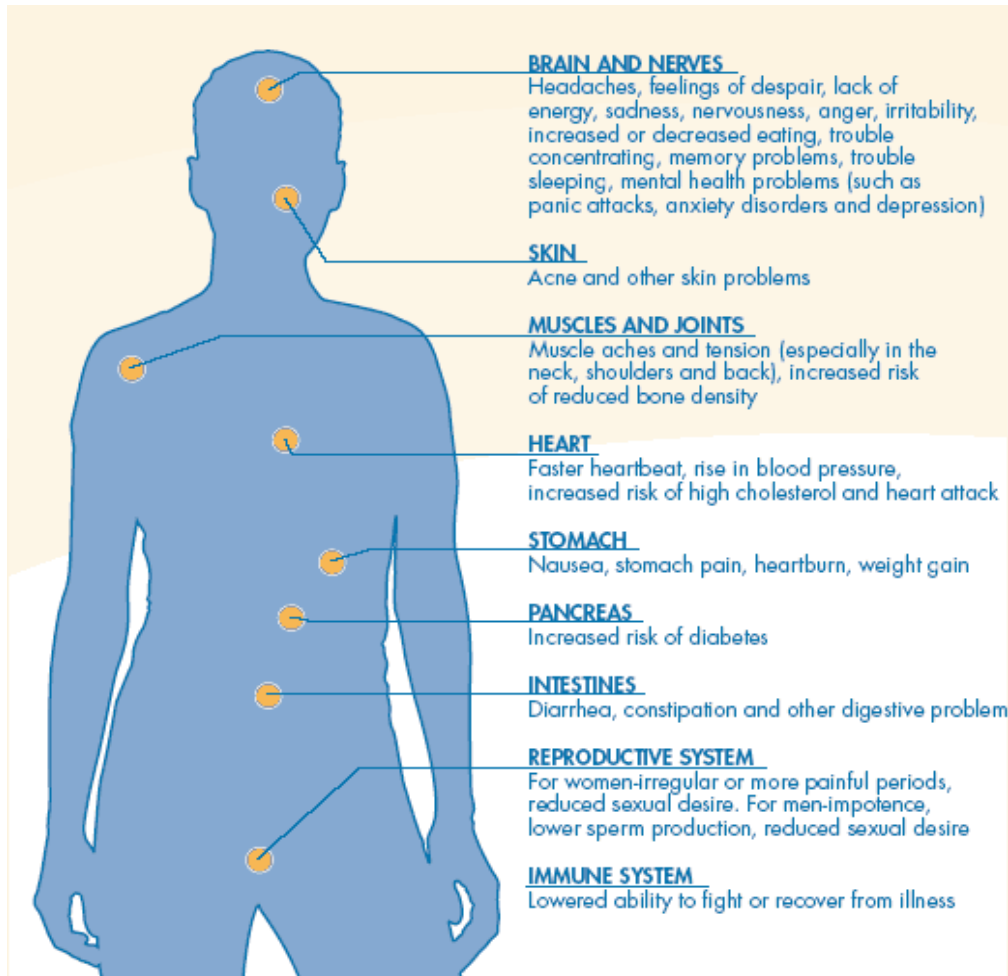
- Empowerment refers to increasing the spiritual, political, social or economic strength of individuals and communities. It often involves the empowered developing confidence in their own capacities.
- Increased dignity and respect for oneself and others.
- Living free of fear and knowing that you have the ability and the power within you to make choices relevant to your health and happiness.
- Being authentic, true to yourself and others. Living an egoless life.
- Overcoming personal barriers, letting go of the past and taking action in the present to be the best you can be.
- Living consciously in the "now".
- Cheering and inspiring others onto success and happiness and knowing that you too can be successful and happy too.

Have your participants take a look at the table in their handout and circle the lifestyle habits that best describe them. Do the majority of their lifestyle habits, thoughts and beliefs fall into the empowered/happy/thriving column or the burnt out/unhappy/just surviving column?

The lifestyle habits, thoughts and beliefs in the second column are all unhealthy patterns of emotional and physical behavior that lead to adrenal burn out.

An unhealthy lifestyle can be very toxic to your body.

Circle the areas of your body on this chart that you feel may be a result of your unhealthy habits.



A) Empowered/Happy/Thriving	B) Burnt Out/Unhappy/Only Surviving
<input type="checkbox"/> I exercise approx. 30-60 minutes most days of the week.	<input type="checkbox"/> I rarely/never or excessively exercise.
<input type="checkbox"/> I eat small portions of whole food, from a variety of food groups spaced out evenly throughout the day.	<input type="checkbox"/> I skip meals and snacks or eats large portions of processed, refined and unhealthy foods more than I should.
<input type="checkbox"/> I take the time to plan, prepare and pack healthy meals and snacks most day of the week.	<input type="checkbox"/> I rarely or never make the time to plan, prepare or pack healthy meals and snacks. I eat lunch at my desk or on the run in my car.
<input type="checkbox"/> I take time for lunch/snack breaks. I include some exercise and/or relaxing time during these breaks.	<input type="checkbox"/> I work through lunch and rarely take breaks to refuel and rejuvenate my body and mind.
<input type="checkbox"/> I get between 7 and 9 hours of uninterrupted sleep most nights.	<input type="checkbox"/> I rarely get 7-9 hours of uninterrupted sleep.
<input type="checkbox"/> I usually feel happy, loving, grateful, energetic, and positive.	<input type="checkbox"/> I often feel sad, resentful, tired, and negative.
<input type="checkbox"/> I accept myself and others for who they are and do not try to control, change, blame or judge.	<input type="checkbox"/> I often try to change and control others. I express disapproval and judge myself and others.
<input type="checkbox"/> I take responsibility for my actions and feelings instead of making excuses and/or blaming others.	<input type="checkbox"/> I blame others for my behavior and feelings. I often say things like; "he/she makes me so angry" and it's all his/her fault this happened"
<input type="checkbox"/> I am able to pick myself up and pull myself out of a bad experience and see the positive learning opportunity being provided.	<input type="checkbox"/> I find it extremely difficult to pick myself up after a negative experience. I continue to dwell on it and head into a downward spiral from there.
<input type="checkbox"/> I let go of the past, live in the present moment and think positively about the future.	<input type="checkbox"/> I hold onto the past, worry constantly about the future and rarely live in the present moment.
<input type="checkbox"/> I respect and take care of my body.	<input type="checkbox"/> I often abuse and neglect my body.
<input type="checkbox"/> I believe in a higher power that gives me strength and comfort.	<input type="checkbox"/> I do not believe that a higher power exists and find no comfort and strength from faith.
<input type="checkbox"/> I rely on healthy food, moderate exercise and relaxation to get me through the day.	<input type="checkbox"/> I often rely on medications and stimulants such as aspirin, alcohol, drugs, nicotine, caffeine and sugar to get me through the day.
<input type="checkbox"/> I seek out holistic sources of healing such as; massage therapy, reflexology, chiropractic, natural herbal remedies, etc. when feeling run down.	<input type="checkbox"/> I either ignore my body or seek out medical solutions in the form of prescription drugs when feeling run down.
<input type="checkbox"/> I believe that I am lucky, smart, fit, lovable, ambitious, creative and hopeful.	<input type="checkbox"/> I often catch myself saying things like; "I never win anything, I'm fat, I can't do that, or I'm so stupid".
<input type="checkbox"/> I enjoy my job and usually find it a positive, rewarding experience.	<input type="checkbox"/> I often complain about and dislike my job.
<input type="checkbox"/> I choose to spend time associating with optimistic people and share positive gossip/stories which inspire me and others to be their best.	<input type="checkbox"/> I find myself engaging in negative gossip and stories of gloom and doom on a regular basis.
<input type="checkbox"/> I take the time needed to foster close, trusting relationships with family and friends.	<input type="checkbox"/> I rarely take the time required to foster close, trusting relationships with family and friends.
<input type="checkbox"/> I set goals and prioritize so that I do not get overwhelmed.	<input type="checkbox"/> I take on too many tasks and often feel overwhelmed.

Have your participants check off the items in each column that best describe their current behaviors and characteristics. Are they thriving or just surviving?

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Adrenal Reserve Test

In your participants hand outs they will find an easy-to-take adrenal reserve test. Explain to them that their scores will help place them in one of the five stages of burnout so that they can make the necessary changes to their lifestyle. Ask them to check the one response that **MOST** applies to them. Tell them that they need to be as **HONEST** with themselves as possible – even if the truth hurts. As they evaluate these questions, ask them to factor in their behaviors over the past twelve months.

Go over the scoring system below.

To determine your score:	
0 points for each “does not apply” or “NO” for yes/no questions	_____
1 point for each “A few times a year or less”	_____
3 points for each “Up to twice a month”	_____
5 points for each “Up to twice a week”	_____
7 points for each “Every day or almost every day”	_____
7 points for each “Yes for yes/no questions	_____
TOTAL = _____	

If your score is 0-60: congratulations.

Driven Stage: 61 to 100

Dragging Stage: 101 to 150

Losing It Stage: 151 to 200

Hitting the Wall: 201 to 250

Burnt Out: 251 +

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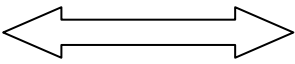
Week #2: Spiritual Empowerment

Happiness is a Choice! Ask your participants to make a conscious decision right now to be happy!

- Peace and happiness: we all want it. Yet, there is something else in us that wants drama and conflict. This is called the “EGO”. The ego and the many dysfunctions it creates, if we let it, will be discussed throughout each section of this program.
- Deciding to be happy is one of the single most significant activities that can enhance our lives and that we have full control over.
- We were not born unhappy: we learned to be unhappy. And, in addition, we have become masters at teaching and reinforcing unhappiness. Unhappiness is not a natural, unavoidable characteristic of the human condition. Unhappiness follows from certain beliefs and judgments which we choose and which we can change. The ego is conditioned and driven by the past and the future it is unconscious!
- Misery as a human experience comes from judging ourselves, other people and events as bad or terrible for us. We can say quite accurately say that we have “THOUGHT” ourselves into unhappiness, and we can think ourselves back out by examining the experiences and the emotions we create and then letting them go.
- Using misery to fight misery (listening to your egoic mind) just adds to more misery. Happiness is a choice, misery is optional.

In class task: On a flip chart or white board write out as many of the characteristics like the ones listed below that the class come up with.

Empowered/Egoic Mind Continuum

Empowered Mind (<u>Being</u>)		Egoic Mind (<u>Having</u>)
Patient		Impatient
Optimistic		Pessimistic
Open-Minded		Closed-Minded (know-it-all)
Humble		Conceited /Attention Seeking
Non-Judgmental		Judgmental
Self-Confident		Insecure/Jealous
Accepting		Defensive
Calm and Collected		Anxious and Irritable
Forgiving		Unforgiving
Good Listener		Self-Absorbed
Encouraging		Discouraging
Trusting		Distrustful
Inspiring		Uninspiring
Peaceful		Argumentative
Respectful		Disrespectful
Loyal		Disloyal
Selfless		Controlling
Intuitive		Insensitive

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What would your response be to the following scenarios be?

1. You are late for an appointment and you're stuck in traffic?
*Yell profanities, make hostile gestures, honk horn, hit steering wheel.
Listen to some of your favorite music or a book on CD, do some deep breathing, call a friend and say hello.*

2. A project deadline at work is fast approaching and you cannot complete it until another co-worker gets you a particular piece of information?
*Send the co-worker a nasty e-mail demanding the information immediately.
March over to the co-workers desk and demand that he/she get you the information.
Send the co-worker an e-mailing explaining why you need the information right away and thank them for their prompt response in advance.
Go and see the co-worker and ask if they have had a chance to put together the information you requested. Remind them how urgently you require it and how appreciative you would be if they could get it to you right away.*

3. You have a problem with your utility bill. You call the customer service line, punch in all the necessary information you are asked for and wait to speak with someone. You are on hold for about 10 minutes after which time you speak with a representative for a couple of minutes and learn that they cannot help you and must transfer you to another department where you are put on hold again for another 5-10 minutes?
*Angrily hang up and curse.
Remain calm and wait patiently for the next representative.*

4. You have asked your significant other or one of your children to do a specific household chore. What would your response be after 10 minutes goes by and the task is still not done? *Yell at them to get it done. Calmly remind them of the task again.*

What would your response be after another 30 minutes goes by? Continue to raise your voice and nag at them to do the task right this instant. Ask them again and explain how much it would help you out if they did the task for you as soon as possible.

*What would your response be after another hour goes by?
Stomp off and do the task yourself while voicing your disapproval and anger at them for not doing and making you do it.*

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Levels of Being Defined

Examples of Being

STATE OF SELF-RELIANCE: High self-esteem and inner validation. Motivates from within. Follows “inner voice”. Is free from all needs and gives selfless service to others. Experiences no resistance.

STATE OF ALLOWING: Accepts life unconditionally. Portrays invisible leadership skills. Harmless to all. Has personal power. Lives each day with no judgment and accepts the truth without blaming others.

DISCOVERY OF LOVE: Learns and practices unconditional giving and unconditional love. Accepts easily, is forgiving. Begins to appreciate harmlessness.

STATE OF AWAKENING: Explores win-win behaviour. Becomes intuitive. Takes conscious risks. Learns to give more instead of taking. Begins to share feelings. Thinks through situations, uses reason.

SELF-LOVE AND VANITY INSTINCTS: Judges others, rationalizes and justifies why Life isn't working. Often lives in denial – uses retaliation – reactive – intellectualizes. Mechanical Addictive Behavior.

SAFETY INSTINCTS: Defensive – fearful – tendency to worry – jealous – blames others and events for lack of success. Does things for approval – attention-seeking. Portrays mechanical addictive behaviour.

SURVIVAL INSTINCTS: Possessive – territorial – controlling and aggressive behaviour. Uses attacking and threatening methods to stay in charge. Mechanical addictive behaviour.

Conscious and Awake
(Self-Realization Stage)
Awakening (Adult Stage)
Mechanical and Asleep (Child Stages)

- The secret to happiness lies not in the events but in our responses to them. Events are events. Each of us chooses our responses by how we decide to view them and by what beliefs and judgments we engage during the process. No one can be inside our heads pulling our strings. We do that for ourselves.
- What makes one person respond to another person or event with unhappiness and another one experiencing the same person or event with happiness is a direct result of that person's views, beliefs and judgments, all of which create feelings.

For Example: **Event** - A co-worker loses his/her job **Most people will say** – “that’s so terrible, I’m so sorry, that’s not fair, what will you do now?” **The empowered person says** – “that’s terrific, this has provided you with the opportunity to go and do what you’ve been talking about doing for all these years, good luck to you, we’ll miss you”.

Empowered people always find opportunity in the midst of adversity!

- We talk as if our emotions/feelings (anger, upset, happiness, craziness, insecurity or excitement) are caused by people and/or events outside of us. This is not the case! Our feelings and emotions are caused by what we choose to think and how we choose to react to what people say and do or what events we encounter minute to minute.
- Every action we take is first filtered through our feelings. How we feel about something will always determine or affect what we do and how well we do it. If we feel positive about something, we will behave more positively about it and vice versa.
- If we have the power to make ourselves uncomfortable and angry, then we must have the power to give ourselves the experience of comfort and peace of mind as well. Rather than be emotional victims of our circumstances or blame other people for what we do and feel, we can take charge! We can choose our state of mind.

Living in the Present Moment:

- Unhappiness does not exist in the present moment. It exists only as a reflection or regret about the past or as an anticipation or worry about the future. To the ego the present moment is an obstacle to be overcome. It is always trying to either keep you in the past or move you away from being present.
- The ego tries very hard to make you believe that everything in the present is a problem that needs to be fixed. The problem with this is that for every problem that is solved, another pops up and there is no end to the unhappiness you feel in the present moment. This is why so many people live in a constant state of impatience, frustration and stress. Happiness eludes them because it can only be found in the present moment, which most people are never fully in.
- Instead the ego is always forcing people to complain about their surroundings, curse what has happened or is happening to them, accuse others for their unhappiness and constantly give into the need they feel to argue and defend their thoughts and beliefs no matter what.
- People believe themselves to be dependant on what happens for happiness. They look upon the present moment as either spoiled by something that has happened and shouldn't have or as lacking because something has not happened yet but should have.

Awareness:

- The ego is always on guard against any kind of perceived diminishment. Automatic ego-repair mechanisms come into effect to restore the mental form of “me”. When someone blames or criticizes me, that to the ego is a diminishment of self, and it will immediately attempt to repair its diminished sense of self through self-justification, defense, or blaming.
- Whether the other person is right or wrong is irrelevant to the ego. It is much more interested in self-preservation than in the truth. Even such a normal thing as shouting something back when another driver calls you an “idiot” is an automatic and unconscious ego-repair mechanism.
- The most common ego-repair mechanism is anger which causes temporary, but huge ego inflation.
- A powerful spiritual practice is to consciously allow the diminishment of ego when it happens without attempting to restore it. For example, when someone criticizes you, blames you, or calls you names, instead of immediately retaliating or defending yourself – DO NOTHING - simply become aware of what you are feeling and allow it to dissolve.

Ask your participants to practice becoming aware of when their egoic mind is rearing its ugly head over the next week. Each time they encounter a situation or start thinking about a past one in which they immediately feel a need to react with unhappiness, impatience, anger, frustration, pain, hate, fear, blame or any other non-loving response – ask them to “STOP” and do nothing. Explain to them that when they observe the ego in themselves, they are beginning to go beyond it – to lessen its power over them. Tell them to stop taking their ego so seriously – that’s exactly what feeds it.

Presence/Awareness:

- Being aware of your breathing takes attention away from your thinking and creates space/peace. It is a way of generating consciousness, of being completely in the moment. You cannot think and be aware of breathing at the same time.
- Conscious breathing stops your mind. But far from being in a trance or half asleep, you are fully awake and highly alert. You are not falling below thinking like when you are under the influence of drugs or alcohol, but rising above it.
- One conscious breath can make space/peace where before there was the uninterrupted succession of one negative, self-destructing thought after another and usually thoughts of the negative, self-destructing nature.
- By feeling the subtle flow of air in and out of your body as well as the rise and fall of your chest and abdomen. Your attention may shift from your breath to the natural aliveness within you.
- Most people are so distracted by their thoughts, so identified with the voices in their heads that they can no longer feel the aliveness within themselves. As a result, they start searching for something to use as substitute for this natural state of well-being.
- Some people seek out drugs/alcohol, extremely loud music, thrills, dangerous activities and intimate relationships. None of which will ever help them experience their aliveness.

Breathing:

- The ego is always on guard against any kind of perceived diminishment.
- Whether the other person is right or wrong is irrelevant to the ego. It is much more interested in self-preservation than in the truth. Even such a normal thing as shouting something back when another driver calls you an “idiot” is an automatic and unconscious ego-repair mechanism.
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- A powerful spiritual practice is to consciously allow the diminishment of ego when it happens without attempting to restore it. For example, when someone criticizes you, blames you, or calls you names, instead of immediately retaliating or defending yourself – DO NOTHING - simply become aware of what you are feeling and allow it to dissolve.

Fighting the Ego:

Take a few moments right now and practice the deep breathing method below with your participants.

Here's how to do it:

- Sit in a chair.
- Rest your hands on your stomach.
- Slowly count to four and inhale through your nose. Feel your stomach and chest rise. Hold it for a second.
- Slowly count to four while you exhale through your mouth. To control how fast you exhale, purse your lips like you're going to whistle. Your stomach and chest will slowly fall.
- Visualize the rising and falling of a WAVE.
- Do this a few times.

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Week #3: Emotional Empowerment

Emotional Empowerment: The power of positive thinking.

- Psychoneuroimmunology (PNI) helps us to understand that our beliefs and thoughts can influence our heart rate, blood pressure, digestion, and immunity and ultimately all of our bodily functions. Your body's biochemistry is heavily influenced by what you think, feel, and believe.
- If we think enough negative thoughts, we will create unhealthy neurotransmitters and negative energy that will result in poor emotional and physical health. If you think mostly positive thoughts you are likely to produce mood-elevating, healthy neurotransmitters, which will produce a feeling of well-being, safety and positive energy.

The law of attraction states that people's thoughts (both conscious and unconscious) dictate the reality of their lives, whether or not they're aware of it. Essentially "if you really want something and truly believe it's possible, you'll get it", but putting a lot of attention and thought onto something you don't want means you'll probably get that too.

Remember when you were learning how to drive and your driver's ed teacher kept saying "focus on what's ahead of you and where you want to go and not at the curb"

This is an example of how the law of attraction works – if you were to focus on the curb that's exactly where you'd end up. Just like in life, if you're always focusing on where you don't want to go and what you don't want to happen then that's exactly where you'll go and what will ultimately happen.

Positive Self-Talk: "A man is what he thinks about all day long" *Ralph Waldo Emerson*

- 77 % of the self-talk people use is very negative, counter-productive and self-defeating.
- Everything you say to yourself in your head and out loud to others about yourself becomes a directive to your subconscious mind. Any time you make a statement about yourself that is negative you are directing your subconscious mind to make you become the person you just described.
- The subconscious mind does not know the difference between the statement that we are weak and the statement that we are strong. It accepts our programming just as we give it. It treats everything we tell it with equal indifference. The end result, we end up becoming the result of what we constantly say to ourselves and others.
- Imagine sitting down in front of your computer and typing in any one of those directions. And imagine your computer will do everything you tell it to do. That is exactly what we do to our personal computers! No wonder nothing ever goes right! No wonder things go wrong! If your personal computer - the one that flies your plane – is programmed with the wrong information, you cannot possibly be as successful as you would like to be – you cannot get where you want to go.

Here are a couple of examples:

1. For as long as you can remember you're always saying "I can't remember people's names". One night you're at a party and you're introduced to someone and you want to remember their name. You then say to yourself I'm going to remember this person's name. Then seconds later you forget the name. Why? Because for the past 20 years you've been telling yourself that that's what you'll do. You've been programming yourself to forget.
2. You casually state that no matter what you do you can't ever seem to make enough money to make ends meet. You're subconscious mind says, "okay, I'll do what you're telling me to do. I'll make sure you can't make ends meet."

Words of Affirmation – Words of affirmation and positive self-talk are tools that reverse the damaging effects of negative programming.

Check off the negative self-talk you currently use in column B. Over the next week practice exchanging those statements for the positive words of affirmation in column A.

A) Positive Words of Affirmation	B) Negative Self-Talk
My mind is sharp and I am able to remember everything.	<input type="checkbox"/> I can't remember anything, my memory is terrible
Today is going to be another great day. I am happy, healthy and ready to enjoy all that life has to offer me today and everyday.	<input type="checkbox"/> It's going to be another one of those days
I am always able to come up with creative ideas and solutions.	<input type="checkbox"/> I'm just not creative
There is no problem I cannot conquer. I am strong in mind, body and spirit. My will, my strength and my determination are always greater than any problem I face.	<input type="checkbox"/> Nothing ever goes right for me
I am really good at making clear, precise, beneficial and proactive decisions whenever necessary.	<input type="checkbox"/> I can't ever make a decision
When I see a cigarette or feel like having one, I automatically hear the words "I do not smoke" My lungs are strong and healthy and I am in complete control of myself and what I do.	<input type="checkbox"/> I'll never be able to quit smoking
Things always go my way.	<input type="checkbox"/> Things never work out for me
I am thankful for and enjoy my aspects of my job. I focus on the things about my job that I enjoy.	<input type="checkbox"/> I hate my job
I am good at breaking large obstacles down into smaller pieces that are easier to handle. I never make any problem appear larger than it actually is.	<input type="checkbox"/> I just can't handle this, it's too overwhelming
I am an intelligent person who is completely capable of understanding and solving any problem I encounter.	<input type="checkbox"/> If only I were smarter
I am at my desired weight and always find the time to eat healthy and exercise regularly. I keep myself fit and healthy and enjoy a life filled with energy and vitality.	<input type="checkbox"/> I'll never lose this weight and get fit – I'm really out of shape and never have any time to exercise
I give myself permission to relax, feel good, breathe deeply and fully and enjoy the feeling of stress leaving my body.	<input type="checkbox"/> I'm so stressed out
I never get sick. I am in perfect health and I	<input type="checkbox"/> I get a cold at this time every year
I always give myself the necessary amount of time to get anywhere I am going. I always arrive on time.	<input type="checkbox"/> I'm always late for everything
I feel completely rested and ready to take on my day. I have more energy than ever before. I feel very alive!	<input type="checkbox"/> I am so tired and exhausted. I have no energy.
I always keep things neat and tidy. I put things back where they belong so I can easily find them when I need to.	<input type="checkbox"/> I'm so messy
I smile a lot. I am happy on the inside and the outside. I like who I am and I'm glad to be alive.	<input type="checkbox"/> I'm so depressed

I am one of the luckiest people on earth.	<input type="checkbox"/> The only kind of luck I have is bad luck
I am in control of my own thinking and I think only those thoughts which bring out the best in me. I never worry.	<input type="checkbox"/> I'm a worry wart
I am a good listener – I hear everything that is said – I am attentive, interested, and aware of everything that is going on around me.	<input type="checkbox"/> I'm not a very good listener
I set goals and I reach them. I know what I want out of life. I go after it and I get it.	<input type="checkbox"/> I'll never reach my goal
Slow moving or traffic jams are not a problem to me. I now enjoy the time I have to organize my thoughts. I will get there when I get there.	<input type="checkbox"/> This traffic is making me crazy
It's raining today and that's fine with me I'm going to have a great day and a little rain isn't going to stop me.	<input type="checkbox"/> Great it's raining, this is such crappy weather
People like me and I feel good about myself. I have a sense of pride in who I am and I believe in myself.	<input type="checkbox"/> Nobody likes me

Care and Feeding of the Mind.

“The care and feeding of the mind is just as important as the care and feeding of the body. The mind unfed weakens just as the body does.” *Mortimer Adler*

Mental junk food is as hot a seller as is physical junk food. We're not saying that you should never indulge in a little junk food. Candy is fun and so is watching a dumb sitcom on occasion. But a steady diet of these things without any nourishment would ruin us. We do have choices.

Every successful person has a system for maintaining a healthy mental diet. They have a steady stream of positive, nurturing, and uplifting ideas and information going into their heads. They weed and feed their minds daily.

Try using one of these analogies:

“Pull the Weeds” – The mind is the garden, the weeds are the negative and destructive thoughts, and the flowers and fruits are positive and constructive thoughts. These flowers and fruits must be cared for, as in keeping the weeds out. Those pesky, negative thoughts that pop into our minds—seemingly out of nowhere. If they're not pulled out quickly and regularly, they take over and choke the life out of the flowers, destroying the garden.

“Flip the Switch” - Think of a light switch, but instead of ON and OFF, think P for positive and N for negative. Ideally, we'd like the switch in the up or positive position at all the time. But for some explained reason, it sometimes gets pushed to the down, or N position. When this happens things get dark, gloomy and scary. So, in order to get out of the dark, we do a simple thing – we flip the switch.

“Change the Channel” – Think of a T.V. remote. Instead of watching the anger and resentment channel, we can watch something more pleasant. We have total control over the channel changer. . Visit these channels frequently; The Beauty Channel, The Gratitude Channel, The Forgiveness Channel and The Love Channel.

Changing Our Neurotransmitters – Reprogramming!

- 98% of the atoms of our bodies are replaced in the course of a year.
- Our skeleton, which appears so fundamentally stable and solid, undergoes an almost complete transformation every 3 months.

- Our skin regenerates within four weeks, our stomach lining within 4 days and a portion of our stomach lining which interfaces with food reconstructs every 4-5 minutes.
- Thousands, even millions, of neurons in our brain can fire in a second; each firing creates original and distinct chemistry as well as the possibility for new and different configurations of interconnecting signals.
- Here lies an amazing opportunity for change. We can actually stop acting as if our opinions and perspectives have been carved in stone and begin to become more open to positive change.
- Every thought or action we produce helps create the experience of this moment and the next. The beliefs we fabricate along the way shape our thoughts and actions.
- By altering our thoughts, actions and behaviors we can begin to create new, healthy neurotransmitters. We can reprogram ourselves.

Vision boards:

Success on any major scale requires a clear vision and consistent action. As we've already discussed, your life to a large extent is the result of your dominant thoughts and self-talk. Nothing will happen by itself. It will all come your way once you have a clear vision and practice consistent thinking and action based on your vision.

Creating your own personal vision board and secondary boards with your significant other, your family and/or your co-workers is an extremely effective tool when trying to empower your life and achieve your goals.

The power to fulfill your personal dreams and the dreams you share with others in your life starts with the ability to represent your vision on the board.

How to create a vision board:

- a) Write down and get a clear picture in your mind of the things you would like to do, obtain, experience, and accomplish in your life. Examples: places you want to visit, a home or vehicle you want to own, a specific goal you want to achieve like completing a marathon.
- b) Next, find pictures that very closely depict these things and cut them out.
- c) Paste all of the pictures on a large piece of bristol board
- d) Put your vision board up somewhere that is very visible to you each day

Bring in a sample vision board to show your participants.

Success: In order to succeed and stay motivated you must have these three things:

1. Desire: is the seed from which all achievement grows. More than any other characteristic it determines whether we're going to be mediocre or successful in life. Desire, not ability, separates average people from those who excel. It's that something that makes it possible for ordinary people to accomplish extraordinary things.

2. **Belief:** your chances of success in any undertaking can always be measured by your belief in yourself. The only limitations we have are the one we put on ourselves. They exist because we believe them, and they won't disappear until we exchange them for a new set of beliefs. Believe you can, and you'll find out that you can!
3. **Clear Mental Picture:** you must first see a very clear picture in your mind before you can do it. Keep in mind that we do not think in words, we think in pictures (this is why a vision board helps). The more clearly and more often we picture ourselves doing something, the more likely we are to do it. It all starts in the mind. Our images are great motivators.
 - Success is not a future event and the end does not justify the means. If the means by which you achieved the success did not contribute to human happiness, meaning that you hurt people and yourself along the way, the end will not be a happy one. This is karmic action.
 - If on your way to achieving your goals you ignore your health, your family and friends, you lie, cheat, steal or hurt others intentionally in any way shape or form then your success in the end will be contaminated by these negative egoic actions and create further unhappiness.
 - People who are empowered realize that their entire life journey towards their goals ultimately consists of the steps they take each and every moment of the day. They understand, in no uncertain terms that there is always only this one step, and they give it their fullest attention.
 - This does not mean that you don't plan, visualize or know where you're going and what you want to achieve, it just means that each step you take needs to be the primary focus and the destination the secondary. What you encounter at your destination once you get there depends on the quality of each and every step you took along the journey.
 - Being authentic and true to yourself and others during every step of your journey towards success is empowering and will lead to a life time of happiness.

Empowered Living Program

Week #4: Personal Empowerment

Beliefs and Fears:

Where do our beliefs come from? Why do we believe what we believe?

- Frequently, we reformulate what other people say to us and about us into the conclusions or beliefs we hold about ourselves. Other peoples negative programming gets passed onto us.
- There are numerous examples of statements and comments that loving parents and family members have told their children without realizing that they were creating a self-beliefs and fears in that child that that would create failure instead of the happiness and success they were trying to bestow.

Commentaries that begin in childhood:

- “You talk too much.” (Conclusion: What I say doesn’t matter.)
- “You’re just no good at that”. (Conclusion: “I won’t ever be able to do this right”).
- “If you loved me, you’d keep your room clean.” (Conclusion: If I don’t do what someone wants me to do they won’t love me.)
- “You’re lazy.”
- “Take the medicine or you won’t get better.” (Conclusion: Medication is the only thing that will save me; I have nothing to do with my own healing process.)
- “You make me unhappy.” (Conclusion: I have the power to cause unhappiness in others.)

Once we become adults the messages change, or do they?

- “If you loved me, you’d be more caring or sexually active.” (Conclusion: I still have to do what people want in order to prove my love.)
- “You make me furious.” (Conclusion: I cause what others feel.)
- “You worry too much”
- “You’ll never lose weight, you eat terribly and you’re lazy”
- “You don’t care about anyone but yourself”
- “Can’t you do anything right?” (Conclusion: I’m ill-equipped; there must be something wrong with me.)
- “You can’t expect to be healthy forever.” (Conclusion: I have no control – disease and sickness are inevitable.)

The above commentaries create beliefs like the ones listed below and can lead to severe physical and emotional consequences

- Your fear of failure - leads to lack of self-confidence – leads to overwork/lack of sleep
- Your fear of being overweight – leads to yo-yo dieting
- Your belief that your worth is based on your possessions, power and your fear of not achieving this status leads to anxiety about your level of achievement - leads to workaholic behavior
- We can observe our bodies and learn a lot about our beliefs. Thoughts occur body-wide; intelligence exists everywhere in our system. When we think, we create new and distinct electromagnetic impulses and chemical substances throughout our entire body. When we say we have changed our mind, we have made a statement of fact. Our minds as well as our bodies change physically each time we change a belief.

- If we change our belief, we change the feelings and behaviors that come from that belief. If we change our vision, which consists of a tapestry of beliefs, we alter an amazing conglomerate of feelings and behaviors at once. Neither endeavor takes any more energy than the other.

The impact of the beliefs you hold is profound!

- If you think something is wrong with you or that you are unlovable, you will probably have corresponding feelings associated with such beliefs – sadness, isolation and lack of self-confidence. Your actions will then follow from that vision of yourself. You might leave a relationship or bury yourself in work to find meaning or a sense of self-worth. Ultimately, your body will reflect your mind-set with sluggishness, a suppressed immune system, vulnerability to disease and viruses and, perhaps, precipitate illness.
- You can prosecute yourself and feel guilty about the past or use the power of beliefs to determine more consciously what happens to you. You do not have to be a victim of your personal history (they are just your beliefs and they can be changed)
- With the realization that we can change our beliefs comes hope, strength and opportunity to create a happier, more empowered you.

FEAR – (false experiences appearing real)

- Fear is nothing but an emotion or set of emotions created by our thoughts, which are driven by our beliefs.
- The way we look at life and the life of those around us determines how we experience things.
- We need to try and move away from the pessimism to find a more useful and inspiring point of view.
- We need to focus more on building bridges between friends not walls between enemies.
- The media bias towards sensationalism of negative events and violence presents a selective, distorted and, in the final analysis, an inaccurate portrait of the state of affairs on this planet. No picture of balance here!
- We have made an addiction out of being informed about bad news, as if knowledge of disasters could somehow contribute to our sense of well-being and serenity. Our lives will never be enriched by the gloomy pronouncements of unhappy people, fearing and judging all they see.
- We feed our minds and the minds of the people around us with such bleak imagery then feel lost, unhappy, afraid and depressed.
- Why not inspire ourselves rather than scare ourselves?
- What we have been taught about ourselves and the universe around us conspires to have us believe that living requires awesome energy and great struggle. “no pain, no gain, you have to take the good with the bad, you’re unlovable, something is wrong with you, no one cares, life is

unfair, there is no justice, look over your shoulder and beware". We become afraid and get stuck in our heads.

- Fear is something we create in our minds. It is not of this moment. Fear lives as something you think will happen in the future based on the beliefs you have as a result of something that happened in the past.
- So often we focus on and strive to change others and the world around us when what we really need to be doing is focusing on and changing ourselves.

Have your participants write down in their empowerment journal three beliefs they currently have about themselves that may be creating fear and holding them back from achieving their goals.

An Attitude of Gratitude:

- A personality trait that people clearly display when they become happier and more empowered is their unending sense of gratitude.
- When we are happy we are truly grateful. The reverse also holds true. When we are grateful, we are truly happy,
- In spite of all the catastrophes that might occur we have the ability to cut through all of the misery by simply turning our attention to being grateful for something. Gratitude becomes the shortest of shortcuts to happiness and empowerment.
- To be grateful means not only to delight, enjoy and appreciate, but also to recognize the blessing and the wonder of an experience.
- Make it a point to tell people how grateful you are. Showing gratitude is not simply just saying an obligatory "thank you". Though that can be a very meaningful expression, those words alone do not encourage us to make our gratitude an action.
- A smile, a hug, a hand written note, a home made meal or craft, a helping hand or other appreciative gestures all amplify the feeling of gratitude.
- Do something for someone who needs some help without expecting anything in return. Notice how great that selfless act makes you feel.

Appreciate Life:

- Whenever we think we have lost our way or have noticed joy to be absent from our lives, we can look around and find a host of things, events and people to appreciate.
- Our blessings come to life through our awareness.
- We can train ourselves to be sensitive to many miracles of living. Take the human body for example; As we sit here in this room, we can breathe, see and think, all rather effortlessly. Incredible! Our hearts pump, sustaining our lives and our consciousness. What an amazing machine our body is.

- How grateful we should be that our fingers can move to write notes on the pages below us. How grateful we should be for the lights that help us to see the words on this screen. When we become Specific in what we are grateful for we can perceive so many marvels that we could not reasonably hope to catalogue them all.
- Gratitude is a feeling we can invoke in ourselves at anytime, anyplace. Instead of getting upset and angry that the house is a mess, be grateful that you have a home. Try altering your perspective in this way and see how you can instantly make yourself feel different.
- Ask your participants to write down at least three things that they are grateful for in their lives each day this week.

Personal Authenticity: Being true to yourself and others.

- Very young children are forever authentically themselves. When a child interacts with others they present themselves the same in each circumstance. No protective masks, no roles modeled and no extra clothing worn to camouflage or impress others.
- Children naturally display a wholeness of person without study or premeditation.
- We, as adults are constantly doing what and acting how we “should”, “have to” and “must”. These are called “roles” and are another one of the dysfunctions that the ego creates to get what it wants.
- The ego thrives on attention and will try to get you to “do” and “be” whatever and whomever it feels you need to in order to receive the attention it desires. Unfortunately the ego seeks attention from outside sources and does not know that the source of all energy and happiness comes from within.
- When we use the expression “falling in love”, it is in most cases just an intensification of the ego wanting and needing. You become addicted to another person, or rather your image of that person. It has nothing to do with true love, which certainly contains no wanting whatsoever.
- In the early stages of many romantic relationships, role playing is quite common. We do not act like our true selves. We play roles in order to attract and keep whoever our ego perceives as the one who will “make me happy, make me feel special and fulfill my needs” However, role playing is hard work, and so these roles cannot be sustained forever, especially when you start living together. This is why we often hear couples saying things like “once we started living together he/she changes, he/she is not the man/women I fell in love with anymore.

Let’s take a look at what we might experience if we stopped acting and reacting the way our ego wants us too.

Even if we had no guarantee of results, what would happen and how would we feel inside if we allowed ourselves the true expression of who we are at all times?

As individuals, we would become open, honest, strong, vulnerable, sometimes clear and sometimes confused.

As lovers, we would be authentic with our feelings, concerns and love and be willing to tear down the walls of silence we may have built out of fear.

As businessmen and women, we would value sincerity and “straight talk” as a powerful tool to build trust with clients, customers and coworkers.

Personal authenticity leads us to abandon the masks and masquerades we do not truly own so that we can embrace and celebrate our true selves.

We can finally give up the exhausting tasks of trying;

- to be someone we are not
- do things we don't really want to do
- say things we really don't mean

Rather than rehearsing the “right response”, we can trust ourselves by allowing the response we feel at any given moment.

You may say, “doesn't this give people a license to be rude?” Yet, what actually materializes is the opposite. Unhappy commentaries are not signs of authenticity; they are signs of unhappiness. When our authenticity comes from happiness and love, the gains and lessons from such honest sharing and self-affirmation ultimately benefit both ourselves and those we address. In addition, we then tend to attract those who appreciate and want the same openness and authenticity. Increased openness and honesty actually enhances a persons sense of happiness, ease and inner harmony. With that comes increased respect and love.

You can begin practicing being authentic by sharing with a lover, a friend, a coworker, a son or daughter or parent some fact about yourself that you might have kept a secret or, at least, shared rarely with others. As you begin to share more freely your concerns and feelings, you will start experiencing what it feels like to be empowered.

Empowered Living Program

Week #5: Physical Empowerment

Physical Empowerment: Balancing your PH levels.

pH (potential of hydrogen) represents the balance of positively charged (acid-forming) ions to negatively charged (alkaline-forming) ions in your body.

Human blood pH should be slightly alkaline (7.35 - 7.45). Below or above this range means symptoms and disease. A pH of 7.0 is neutral. A pH below 7.0 is acidic. A pH above 7.0 is alkaline

An acidic pH can occur from, an acid forming diet, emotional stress, toxic overload, and/or immune reactions or any process that deprives the cells of oxygen and other nutrients. The body will try to compensate for acidic pH by using alkaline minerals. If the diet does not contain enough minerals to compensate, a build up of acids in the cells will occur.

An acidic balance will: decrease the body's ability to absorb minerals and other nutrients, decrease the energy production in the cells, decrease its ability to repair damaged cells, decrease its ability to detoxify heavy metals, make tumor cells thrive, and make it more susceptible to fatigue and illness. A blood pH of 6.9, which is only slightly acidic, can induce coma and death.

The reason acidosis is more common in our society is mostly due to the typical American diet, which is far too high in acid producing animal products like meat, eggs and dairy, and far too low in alkaline producing foods like fresh vegetables. Additionally, we eat acid producing processed foods like white flour and sugar and drink acid producing beverages like coffee and soft drinks. We use too many drugs, which are acid forming; and we use artificial chemical sweeteners like NutraSweet, Spoonful, Sweet 'N Low, Equal, or Aspartame, which are poison and extremely acid forming. One of the best things we can do to correct an overly acid body is to clean up the diet and lifestyle.

To maintain health, the diet should consist of 60% alkaline forming foods and 40% acid forming foods. To restore health, the diet should consist of 80% alkaline forming foods and 20% acid forming foods.

Generally, alkaline forming foods include: most fruits, green vegetables, peas, beans, lentils, spices, herbs and seasonings, and seeds and nuts. Generally, acid forming foods include: meat, fish, poultry, eggs, grains, and legumes.

The pH scale is from 0 to 14, with numbers below 7 acidic (low on oxygen) and numbers above 7 alkaline. An acidic body is a sickness magnet. What you eat and drink will impact where your body's pH level falls. Balance is Key!

Encourage your participants to review the chart in their handouts and become familiar with what foods are acid forming and which ones are alkalizing.

Shifting your pH Toward Alkaline *Through Deep Breathing*

Deep breathing literally "blows off steam" in the form of excess CO₂, an acid that otherwise remains in your body. When you are tense and breathe shallowly or hold your breath, blood is not being properly purified or oxygenated. The result, CO₂ (acidic waste product) is not eliminated from the body but kept in your circulatory system. When you find yourself yawning and sighing deeply this is a sign of lack of oxygen and that your body is too acidic (not in its optimal state). A healthy body has a negatively charged alkaline chemistry and is in a parasympathetic state.

Achieving Chemical/Hormonal Balance:

- Whether or not you take the time to eat, your body strives to maintain balanced blood sugar levels at all times. If your blood sugar were to fall too low for too long, you would slip into a coma. If your blood sugar remained too high for too long, you would develop type II diabetes.
- When you do not eat your brain assumes you are in a time of famine and sends a red alert to your adrenals to release adrenaline and cortisol. Adrenaline releases emergency energy from sugar stored in your liver and muscles, and cortisol breaks down your own muscles mass to turn it into sugar.
- Since excess sugar damages brain and body cells, this influx of sugar into your bloodstream triggers the secretion of insulin, which immediately stores sugar safely away into cells as fat.
- As long as you do not eat, or eat unhealthy foods, your brain will continue to send red alerts to your adrenals. This adrenaline/cortisol/insulin vicious cycle of breaking down and storing away sugar will repeat over and over. This is referred to as the blood sugar rollercoaster.
- Eventually your adrenal reserve will become depleted, and you can suffer from decreased muscle mass, increased fat around your middle, a flabby body, hypoglycemia, lowered metabolism and pre-mature aging.
- When you eat, two hormones, glucagon and insulin, are released from your pancreas. When you eat a balanced diet these hormones are balanced. Glucagon is responsible for releasing sugar, fat, and proteins from your cells to be used for fuel. Insulin is the fat-and-nutrient storing hormone that ushers nutrients into your cells.

Nutritional Balance:

- When it comes to the stress of our modern life, eating is one factor that is in your control. In fact, if you look at all the factors that contribute to health and well-being as a hierarchy, eating well would be one of the number one factors.
- Think of how wonderful it is that there is something so simple that you are actually in control of – and something you can do for your health that makes such a huge difference.
- The purpose of eating is to provide the body with the necessary building materials for ongoing repair, rebuilding, and metabolic processes.
- Don't skip meals
- Have low calorie, healthy snacks between breakfast and dinner
- Always eat breakfast
- Eat in a relaxed and quiet setting
- Be present when you eat – do not eat while watching T.V., working, driving, etc.
- Eat slowly

Ask your participants to start incorporating some of the healthy nutrition habits listed in their handouts over the next week.

Healthy Body Healthy Mind:

- Aside from the obvious benefits of physical activity such as; increased energy, weight loss/maintenance, enhanced muscular strength, improved sleep and disease prevention – regular moderate exercise acts as an antidote to physical and emotional stress and helps improve mood and self-esteem. Remember, our body and mind are closely linked.
- Exercise raises the levels of certain mood-enhancing neurotransmitters in the brain. It also boosts feel-good endorphins, releases muscle tension, helps you sleep better, and reduces levels of the stress hormone cortisol. It also increases body temperature, which may have calming effects. All of these changes in your mind and body can improve such symptoms as sadness, anxiety, irritability, stress, fatigue, anger, self-doubt and hopelessness.

Below are some psychological and emotional benefits of exercise.

1. Confidence. Being physically active gives you a sense of accomplishment. Meeting goals or challenges, no matter how small, can boost self-confidence at times when you need it most. Exercise can also make you feel better about your appearance and your self-worth.
 2. Distraction. When you have poor emotional health or anxiety, it's easy to dwell on how badly you feel. But dwelling interferes with your ability to problem solve and cope in a healthy way. Dwelling can also make depression more severe and longer lasting. Exercise can shift the focus away from unpleasant thoughts to something more pleasant, such as your surroundings or the music you enjoy listening to while you exercise.
 3. Interactions. Poor emotional health and anxiety can lead to isolation. That, in turn, can worsen your condition. Exercise may give you the chance to meet or socialize with others, even if it's just exchanging a friendly smile or greeting as you walk around your neighborhood.
 4. Healthy coping. Doing something positive to manage depression or anxiety is a healthy coping strategy. Trying to feel better by drinking alcohol excessively, dwelling on how badly you feel, or hoping depression and anxiety will go away on their own aren't helpful coping strategies.
- No matter how unhappy you feel, you can still make choices about what you do. Choosing to do nothing is still a choice, but usually not the best one. If you choose to take good care of your physical self it is more likely that you will be able to deal effectively with the emotional stress in your life.
 - It is very unfortunate, but many people believe that work is more important than their own well-being. Short of reaching the burn out stage, most people do not wake up one day to an epiphany that exercise is something that they need to do for survival. It is a gradual process of incorporating small changes in your lifestyle which include physical activity.
 - It doesn't take much. 30-60 minutes of walking on most days of the week, 20 minutes of some form of strength training twice a week and some form of stretching will provide substantial health benefits both emotionally and physically.

Here are some tips:

- Think positive thoughts about exercise to create those healthy neurotransmitters.
- You don't have to hit the gym to get the benefits of physical activity. Exercise comes in many different forms.
- Keep an exercise journal and write down some SMART goals. Reward yourself when you reach those goals.
- Don't over-exercise – this is not usually a problem for most people. Over-exercising can make you fat by burning out your adrenals so that they cannot release enough DHEA (a hormone that burns fat and builds your muscle back up after cortisol breaks it down) to keep up with the cortisol. The result, muscle wasting and lowered metabolism. So now instead of being fit and muscular you will begin to show signs of cellulite and fat around your middle.

Empowered Living Program

Week #6: Empowered Relationships

Empowering your Relationships:

LOVE

- Love is the most important word in the English language and the most confusing.
- We all have “love tanks” and when our tanks are full we feel like we can climb mountains, cross seas, and conquer any obstacle that comes in our path. We feel happy, grateful, full of energy, and ready to do anything for those we love.
- When our “love tanks” are empty, even the smallest mountain seems unclimbable, seas uncrossable and simple obstacles unbearable. We feel sad, resentful, exhausted and no longer willing to do things for the ones we love.
- Whatever the quality of your relationships right now, they can always be better.
- Nothing can replace the human need for emotional love.

The 5 Languages of Love:

In this section we will discuss how the Five Languages of Love can help to keep our “love tanks” full and our relationships empowered.

Different people express love in different ways. What speaks volumes to you may be meaningless to others.

The key to building healthy relationships is to understand each other’s unique needs and learn to speak the right love language.

- **Words of Affirmation** – verbal compliments, or words of appreciation, are very powerful communicators of love.
- **Quality Time** - giving someone your undivided attention. Two people sitting in a room are in close proximity, but they are not necessarily together.
- **Receiving Gifts** - A gift is something you can hold in your hand and say “Look, he was thinking of me”, or “she remembered me.” It doesn’t matter if the gift was expensive or not. What is important is that you thought of him/her.
- **Acts of Service** - Doing things for someone like cooking, cleaning, lawn work, fixing something, planning an outing, painting, helping with the kids, getting the groceries, paying the bills, etc.
- **Physical Touch** -Holding hands, kissing, embracing, and sexual intimacy are all ways of communicating emotional love. For some individuals physical touch is their love language. Without it, they feel unloved.

Ask your participants to fill out the profile in their handouts and have them ask their significant other to do the same.

Letting go of Judgments:

- Letting go of judgments can be a shortcut to happiness. By discarding judgments and embracing people and situations more openly, we not only provide ourselves with opportunities for great happiness but also sometimes pierce the walls formerly viewed as impenetrable.
- Judgments about people and possibilities limit our thinking and what we might try to accomplish. With the very best of intentions, we try to use judgments as powerful tools to help safeguard ourselves and those we love.
- We want to be able to distinguish between “good” and “bad”, “right” and “wrong”, “possible” and “impossible” in order to help us make decisions and choose the appropriate behavior.
- We learned to judge as children. Just as we absorbed beliefs without question from our parents and friends, from politicians, religious leaders, and the media, so also we learned unquestionably to judge just about everyone and everything in our world.
- We spend most of our lives judging – our love relationships, our finances, our sexuality, our parenting and our self-worth. Then we turn the lens of our scrutinizing eye toward other people and toward events.
- We have become geniuses in pinpointing all that’s difficult and bad in our lives and the world around us. The reward results in continual stress, discomfort and anxiety. We set ourselves up for unhappiness rather than for peace or comfort. We have allowed the ego to take us over once again.
- When you start focusing on what is good and admirable in yourself and others all of your relationships will automatically improve
- The law of attraction “what you focus on expands, grows and multiplies”. Focus on the negative and that’s what you’ll attract and get more of. Focus on the positive and more good things will come your way.
- Start keeping your eyes open and catch people doing things right instead of always seeking out and criticizing others for what they’re doing wrong. Giving people attention for “negative” or “bad” behavior only leads to more “negative” and “bad” behavior. We all strive for attention; whether it’s good or bad it’s still attention.

Letting go of the past:

- The past has no power to stop you from being present and happy now. Only your grievance, the baggage of your thoughts and emotions about the past, can do that.
- A grievance is a strong negative emotion connected to an event in the past that is being kept alive by compulsive thinking, by re-telling the story in your head or out loud of what someone did to you.
- A grievance will contaminate not only your mind but many other areas of your life.
- The negative energy you create when you think or talk about it can distort your perception of an event that is happening in the present moment. It will also influence the way you speak and behave towards others in the present.

- Holding onto the past and the emotions it brings about in you takes a lot of energy and keeps you stuck in an unhappy, dysfunctional emotional and physical state.

Ask your participants to write down in their empowerment journal 3 grievances they currently hold. Have them practice letting go of the negative emotions that stem from holding onto these past experiences.

Effective Communication:

- Why are we so quick to interject and voice our disapproval when we see others doing something we do not “believe” is “right” or “good” yet we say nothing and hardly even notice when people are doing the things we want them to do?
- Think of how your relationship with your significant other might change if you started expressing your gratitude for the things that he or she does do that you appreciate instead of only noticing and nagging at him/her for the things they do not do.
- What if you began to notice and actually express your pleasure to your children for sharing with each other or helping you or one another instead of always giving them your attention by showing your disapproval with them when they are not getting along so well?
- The law of attraction tells us that we will most likely start witnessing more of the things we do express gratitude and appreciation for and less of what we don't.
- Another way to improve your communication with others and get more of what you want is to ask for what you want instead of demanding it. We tend to TELL others what to do instead of ASKING them if they would do it.
- Most people are much more receptive to a non-demanding request than to an outright order. Asking someone to do something automatically gives them a sense of control over the situation and allows them to choose to fill your request or not.
- Within a close relationship, love cannot be demanded. We can request things of each other, but we must never demand anything. Requests give direction to love, but demands stop the flow of love.

Empowered Living Program


Program Summary

I would like to personally thank and congratulate you all for participating in this program.

I hope that you will take what you've learnt over the past six weeks and use it to continue making positive changes in your life.

Key points to remember:

- Happiness and empowerment come from within you and can never be achieved through external sources.
- Your emotional health affects your body and vice versa.

Healthy mind  **Healthy body**

- Happiness is a choice – Choose to be happy!
- The law of attraction – positive attracts positive and negative attracts negative.

Thinking positive thoughts, letting go of the past, living in the present, eating healthy, exercising, loving unconditionally, etc. are not easy things to do at all times. However, the more you practice these behaviors the more empowered and happier you will become.

Empowered Living Program

Program Reference Guide and Suggested Reading List

- Life's Greatest Lessons – Hal Urban, 2003
- Peaks and Valleys – Spenser Johnson, MD 2009
- Happiness is a Choice: Barry Neil Kaufman 1991
- Tired of Being Tired: Jesse Lynn Hanley, MD 2002
- What to Say When you Talk to Yourself: Shad Helmstetter, Phd 1987
- The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People: Stephen r. Covey, 1989
- The Five Love Languages: Gary Chapman 2004
- The Seven Levels of Intimacy: Matthew Kelly 2006
- The Power of Focus: Jack Canfield, Mark Victor Hansen, Les Hewitt, 2000
- A New Earth: Eckhart Tole 2005
- Stillness Speaks: Eckhart Tole 2003
- The Power of Now: Eckhart Tole
- The Secret: Rhonda Byrne 2006
- How to Really Change Your Life: Norm Barlow, Phd 2007