

# Up Level Your Body, Your Mood & Your Life

8 simple  
daily actions  
with big  
impact



# Welcome!

I'm so happy to share with you these 8 Simple Daily Actions that will Up Level Your Body, Your Mood, and Your Life.

*Each one of us has the power and ability to choose, every day, who we are, who we want to become, and how we want our lives to look. We choose with every bite we take, every interaction we have with others, and every action we do or don't take. Many of these choices seem insignificant at the time, but these seemingly insignificant choices makeup our days, our experiences, our bodies, and our lives.*

So, who do you want to be? What do you want your life to look like? Do you want a healthier, stronger, leaner body? More energy, focus and calm? Stronger relationships? A better job, more money? Less stress, more joy?

The following 8 Simple Daily Actions are just that, they are simple, but they are also powerful. Done together and consistently, they can and will improve your mood, increase your confidence and sense of connectedness, improve your ability to focus and make decisions, improve your energy, and reduce stress, in addition to a whole slew of other positive body/mind/life affects.

**And when you feel better about yourself, your relationships tend to improve and you're more likely to take positive action toward your goals and the life you want.**

You're likely already familiar with some of the information in this guide, you might even do some of the Daily Actions already, or maybe not. Whether the information is brand new or just a refresher doesn't matter, what matters is what you choose to do with it now, who you want to be, and what you want your life to look like going forward.

These 8 Simple Daily Actions are my personally tried-and-true, go-to daily actions for health, wellness, and success. When I'm feeling off my game, unmotivated, or stressed out and want to cry (sometimes literally over spilt milk, yep, been there), it's usually because somewhere along the way, I stopped doing one or more of these daily actions. On the flip side, I know exactly what I need to do to get back on track, refocus, and reboot, and that is what I'm going to share with you here. I hope these simple-yet-powerful daily actions serve you as well as they continue to serve me.

Each daily action is completely free, anyone can do them, and they can be done anywhere. All they require is a little time out of each day. *Let's dive in!*





## *8 Simple Daily Actions To Up Level Your Body, Your Mood & Your Life*

### *First Things First: Set the Tone for a Great Day*

#### DAILY ACTION #1

##### **Make your bed.**

**WHY:** Making your bed sends yourself the message that **you are worth the time and effort, you deserve nice things, you are organized, and you get s#!# done**. It also encourages you to keep the rest of your room tidier, which leaves you feeling even more put together and ready to take on the day.

Retired U.S. Navy Admiral SEAL William H. McRaven explained in his 2014 commencement speech at The University of Texas at Austin, "Making your bed will also reinforce the fact that little things in life matter. If you can't do the little things right, you will never do the big things right. And, if by chance you have a miserable day, you will come home to a bed that is made — that you made — and a made bed gives you encouragement that tomorrow will be better."

**HOW:** As soon as you get up, straighten the pillows, tuck in the sheets, smooth out the blankets, and top with pretty throw pillows if you like. This should take you two minutes tops. Daily action #1, done!



## DAILY ACTION #2

### Make time for silence, mindfulness & mindset.

**WHY:** This simple practice is packed with a whole lot of up-leveling punch – infusing your day with a calm-yet-laser-like focus, improving your mood, decision making, emotional control, digestion, and immune system, inspiring action toward your goals, and helping to combat the day's stresses before they even start.

Meditation, mindfulness, and visualization are all valuable tools on their own, and even more powerful performed in combination with one another like you will be doing here.

**HOW:** Take as long as you like with this exercise, but if you are anxious about an already packed schedule, you really only need a few minutes.

1. **Sit with your back supported and your head free.** After you make your bed and hit the head, find a comfy spot on the couch or a chair. No yoga mat or meditation cushion required.
2. **Take 5-10 deep belly breaths,** expanding your belly on the inhale and pulling it in on the exhale. Begin to lengthen your exhale while noticing the sensation of the air moving in and out through your nose.
3. **Relax areas of tension in your body.** Slowly scan your body from head to toe, imagine any tension leaving your body with each exhale.
4. **Focus on one or all of your five senses.** Next, move your attention to your senses and spend several moments here. What noises do you hear, what subtle smells can you pick up?
5. **Finally, visualize ONE goal as if it's already a reality** – what are you doing, who are you with, how does it *feel* – focus on that feeling. Or, visualize the day ahead, see yourself moving through it with ease, handling any challenges that may arise with compassion and grace.

**LEVEL UP:** Choose at least one affirmation that supports you and your goal, say it out loud with this exercise and anytime throughout the day. Two of my favorites: "I am strong and capable." and "I am 100% committed to achieving (my goal)."

# *gratitude changes everything...*

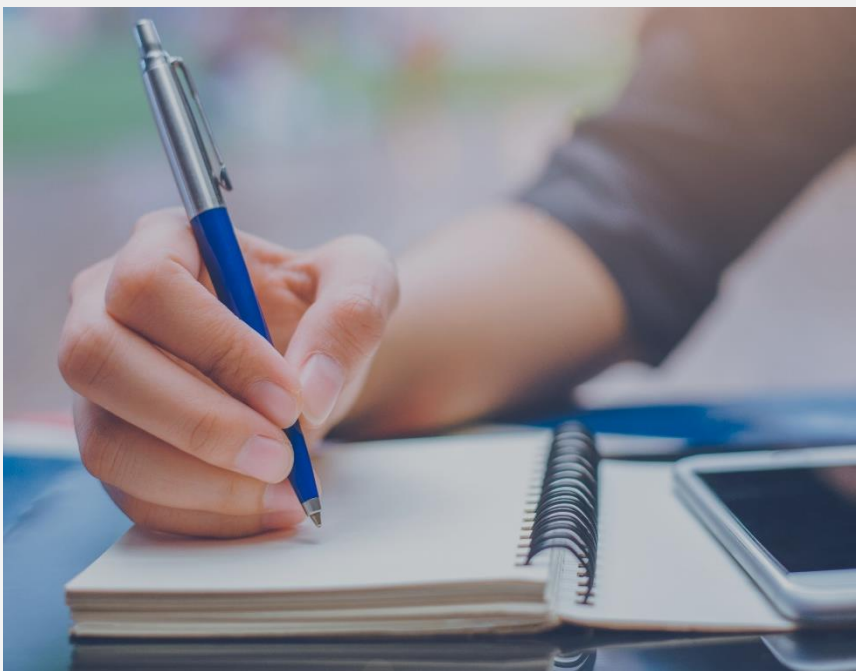
## DAILY ACTION #3

### Keep a gratitude journal.

**WHY:** According to researchers, gratitude is the single most effective tool for increasing happiness. Let me repeat that one more time...

*Gratitude is the single most effective tool for increasing happiness.*

And when we are happy, every area of our life benefits.



**Gratitude is simply taking the time to think about the good things in your life**, and really there is no wrong way to do it. Just by asking the question, “*What am I grateful for?*” your body begins to flood with dopamine, increasing positive emotions like optimism and a sense of camaraderie.

Gratitude is also strongly and consistently associated with increased self-esteem and optimism, more resilience, enhanced empathy and stronger relationships, better sleep, and even better physical health.

Don't worry if you have trouble “feeling grateful”. We can choose to be grateful even when we are hurt, angry, and wish our current circumstances were different. Gratitude is a choice.

**HOW:** Write down at least 3 things you are grateful for. Some days those three things might be really basic, like “my health, my home, and my loved ones” or “sunshine, hazelnut coffee, and non-dairy creamer” and sometimes you might be inspired to fill an entire page, add hearts or smiley faces, and maybe even a picture. Remember, there is no wrong way to do it.

Over the years, I have used pretty journals with positive quotes on their covers, Cat Yoga wall calendars, and the Notes app on my phone, and they have all worked just fine, so get fancy or keep it simple, just be sure to keep it all in one place so you can go back to it anytime you need a reminder of all the good. ❤️



## *Let's Get Physical*

### DAILY ACTION #4

#### Exercise for 15-20 minutes.

**WHY:** Yep, just 15 minutes (that's 1% of your day!) Fifteen minutes of exercise, done consistently, can build strength, purge excess fat, lower stress hormones like cortisol (which can contribute to weight gain), improve cardiovascular and brain health, increase life expectancy, and a long, long list of other positive body and brain benefits. Bottom line, exercise makes us healthier, happier, stronger, less stressed, and more fit.

*Even just a single workout will boost your mood (releasing dopamine and serotonin), improve your focus, and quicken your reaction time (no more spilt milk, here!)*

**Committing to just 15 minutes also makes it easier to establish and maintain a consistent exercise habit**, because making just a small time commitment makes it an easier commitment to keep. And by keeping that commitment today, you are more likely to stick with it tomorrow and the next day and the day after that – feeling better everyday, physically, mentally, and emotionally.

**HOW:** This will look different for everyone, but in a general nutshell...

- ✓ Meet yourself where you are
- ✓ Aim for a perceived exertion (how hard you feel like your body is working) of 6 or more on a scale of 1-10 (10 being the hardest)
- ✓ Try to work a little harder than the day before, and
- ✓ Include some strength training.

Lastly, there is a lot of information out there on exercise and it can be overwhelming. Don't get so caught up in having the perfect plan that you end up doing nothing at all. At the end of the day, *some exercise is always (and scientifically proven to be) better than none.*

Think 15 minutes isn't enough? Think again. Just 15 minutes of High Intensity Interval Training (alternating between low and high intensity exercise) offers the same benefits as 60 minutes of moderate cardio. One recent study found that a 10-minute workout, with **just one minute of high-intensity** (broken into 20-second bouts), had the same benefit as 45 minutes of jogging; and, after 12 weeks, study participants showed a 20% increase in cardiovascular endurance.



## DAILY ACTION #5

### Drink 8-10 glasses of water.

Clients sometimes ask me, "Do I really need to drink water?" My answer is always 100%, YES!

**WHY:** Every system, organ, function, and tissue of the body requires water, it is the key nutrient every single cell depends on for survival.

Staying hydrated keeps your body functioning in tip-top shape... and leads

to lots of wonderful up-leveling benefits, like **brighter, clearer skin, more energy, clearer thinking, less hunger pangs, and maybe even looser-fitting clothes** (since your body won't need to cautiously store water for that drought anymore!)

Conversely, allowing yourself to get dehydrated can zap your energy and, worse, it can lead to a whole host of issues, like joint pain (cartilage is ~80% water), wrinkles (skin ~64% water), brain farts and brain fog (or problems with thinking and reasoning, brain ~80% water), constipation, heartburn, raised blood pressure, worsened asthma and allergies, kidney stones, and bloating.

**HOW:** Women should aim for ~11.5 cups of (non-alcoholic) fluids each day, and men should shoot for ~15.5 cups. If you are eating a healthy diet, that includes vegetables and fruit, your food will account for about 20% of that. Bottom line, drink 8-10 cups of pure water, every day.



Who says water has to be plain, boring and have no taste? **Fruit and fresh herbs add tons of flavor.** Here are a few of my favorite combinations...

- Lemon, strawberries & basil
- Lemon, raspberries & rosemary
- Cucumber, honeydew melon & mint

Mix fruit, herbs and water together. Allow at least 2 hours for the fruit and herbs to work their magic, and enjoy!



## DAILY ACTION #6

### Eat high-quality, whole, fresh foods.

**WHY:** The food we eat matters. The foods we eat affect everything from our gene expression and immune system to our hormones and brain chemistry. That's right, food not only affects our waistline and risk of dis-ease, it affects our mood, how we feel, and even our menstrual cycles... say hello to fiber and goodbye to painful periods!

Quality, whole, fresh foods are the foundation for a beautiful, strong, healthy body... and when we feel strong in our bodies, **when we trust ourselves to love ourselves with the choices we make, we feel stronger in every aspect of our lives.**

**HOW:** Forget counting calories and focus on quality...

- ❖ **Eliminate sugar and processed food.** Calories are not all the same. Processed foods and foods high in sugar make us sick and fat, it's time to break up with them. You deserve better.
- ❖ **Eat lots of veggies (preferably at every meal).** It's easier than you think – try a green smoothie for breakfast, go for a big green salad with lean protein (chickpeas, eggs, grilled chicken) for lunch, and of course more veggies at dinner. Easy peasy!
- ❖ **Plan and prep ahead.** By far, I eat much better when I meal plan, shop with a list, and prep ingredients ahead of time. I find my husband does too – he doesn't want to hear me talk about his diet, like, ever, but if I have healthy foods prepped and ready-to-eat in the fridge, he enjoys them without a second thought... or lecture, I mean, conversation. ☺

My favorite foods to always have on hand, prepped, and ready to go, are apples, berries, hardboiled organic pasture-raised eggs, leftover veggies, baby carrots, grape tomatoes, hummus singles, plain non-dairy yogurt, dark chocolate, and Peanut Butter Cookie Lara bars.

On a final note, be careful how you talk to yourself about your food choices. If you focus on what you "can't have" you'll always feel deprived and disempowered. Instead, remind yourself that it's a choice you are making to feel better, nourish your body, and support your best self.







## *Rediscover Pleasure, Meaning & Rest*



### DAILY ACTION #7

#### Take 15 minutes for joy.



**WHY:** Joy can bring us into the present, align us with our purpose, make us feel like ourselves again, and remind us that life is more than just getting through each day.

Not only will taking time for joy make you happier, it will make you healthier, your relationships better, give you more energy, and one more thing to add to your gratitude list. ☺ It will also show those around you that it's okay to enjoy their lives a little more, too.



**HOW:** Give yourself permission to ignore your To Do list for 15, 10, even 5 minutes. If you're thinking, "what's 5 minutes going to do, I might as well skip it"... stop, you are just sabotaging yourself.



Yes, life is busy – we have jobs, school, children, family obligations, and laundry – but somehow we manage to find time for our favorite shows and social media, so maybe, just maybe, we can find time for joy, too.



If you still can't seem to find time, it's okay to multitask and/or get the family involved, for example, spend 10 minutes on your garden while the dog does his business, color with your kids, or volunteer with the whole family.

What brings you joy? Do you have an old hobby you haven't touched in years? Or something you'd like to try "someday". Here are some ideas to get the wheels spinning...



- ❖ **Gardening** – start small with an indoor herb garden or patio tomato plants
- ❖ **Reading** – just for fun, no work!
- ❖ **Cooking** with fresh ingredients from the farmers market
- ❖ **Bubble Baths** (this one should be mandatory, IMO :-))
- ❖ **Volunteering** at an animal shelter or gathering old blankets to donate
- ❖ **Coloring**
- ❖ **Painting**
- ❖ **Pottery**
- ❖ **Refinishing Furniture**
- ❖ **Playing an Instrument**
- ❖ **Watching the Sun Set**
- ❖ **Hiking**
- ❖ **Horseback Riding**
- ❖ **Archery**
- ❖ **Scrapbooking**
- ❖ **Playing Board Games**
- ❖ **Bird Watching**





#### DAILY ACTION #8

### Make sleep non-negotiable.

**WHY:** Getting enough quality sleep affects how you feel, how you think, and how you look, it even affects your appetite and food cravings. When we are well rested, we have more natural energy, better decision-making and problem-solving abilities, and it's easier to cope with change, control our emotions and behavior, and fight infections like the common cold.

With proper sleep, we also tend to have less wrinkles and puffiness, brighter eyes, glowing skin, and healthier fuller hair. Did I mention sleep is way cheaper than coffee, antidepressants, and wrinkle cream?

**HOW:** Shoot for 7-9 hours of sleep a night, *ideally*, although it will vary some from person to person (many athletes are known to sleep 10-12 hours a night!) Listen to your body, if you need an alarm and feel groggy when you wake up, you most likely aren't getting enough.

To start, figure out what time you need to go to sleep in order to get 8 hours (you can adjust from there), and then plan to start shutting it down at least an hour before that – turn off the TV, do NOT look at social media (we all know how easy it is to go down that rabbit hole, only to look up an hour or more later), wash your face, read, write in your gratitude journal, and then lights out. Two things I can't sleep without? My white noise machine and my eye mask!

If you have trouble sleeping, you may also want to steer clear of caffeine after Noon and avoid alcohol altogether.



# *My invitation to you...*

You may still be thinking, *"I have so much to do already and not enough hours in the day. How will I find time to do all of these too?"*

Try the Daily Actions for just 10 days, that's it, and then decide if you want to keep going or not. I truly believe you will find that not only will they become easier to do, but you will also find you **have more time and get more done**, leaving more time and energy to enjoy your life and go after your biggest goals.



Here's a quick recap of how the 8 Simple Daily Actions are going to Up Level Your Body, Your Mood, and Your Life...

- ❖ Boosting mental energy and focus... **so you get more done in less time**
- ❖ Enhancing brain function, helping you to make better decisions and less mistakes... **saving time, mental and emotional energy, and increasing your capacity to achieve at a higher level**
- ❖ Increasing feelings of happiness, optimism and connectedness... **strengthening your relationships and likelihood to take action toward your goals and the life you want**
- ❖ Improving your physical health... **so you spend less time in pain and discomfort, and more time doing the things you want to**
- ❖ Raising your physical energy – **so you feel like doing more**
- ❖ Decreasing stress and feelings of overwhelm... **saving time and energy**
- ❖ Enhancing your appearance, reducing wrinkles, puffiness, water retention, and excess body fat... **stomping out negative self-talk, saving mental and emotional energy, boosting confidence, and increasing a sense of control and accomplishment**
- ❖ Strengthening feelings of abundance and generosity... **improving relationships, connectedness, and sense of purpose**

# Resources

## VIDEOS & PODCASTS

- For more inspiration and motivation to make your bed (and other life advice), [Admiral McRaven, retired Navy SEAL and author of Make Your Bed, Commencement Speech.](#)
- [Mindfulness Exercises](#) you can do anywhere, anytime – from Eckart Tolle and Oprah Winfrey. (3 minutes)
- Fantastic podcast episode on stress, how it is linked to food choices, and the [Importance of Healthy Pleasure to De-stress and Regulate Our Diets.](#) (Also, two of my favorite Functional Medicine doctors, I highly recommend connecting with them through their websites, Instagram, podcasts, and books.) (video)
- My favorite overall health and wellness [Podcast.](#)

## WEBSITES & FREE APPS

- [Insight Timer](#) offers a gentle, customizable timer, guided meditations, and soothing music playlists to fall asleep to. (website and free app)
- [My Fitness Pal](#), my favorite tool for tracking food, water, and exercise. (website and free app)
- I also use [Interval Timer](#) ALL the time. The intervals are completely customizable which makes it perfect for HIIT workouts, boxing rounds, and walk/run intervals, at any fitness level. (free app)

## WORKOUTS

- Check out some of my [Quickie Workouts](#) to help you get moving.

## RECIPES

- My favorite [Green Smoothie Recipe](#), so yummy and delicious you won't even notice the greens, I promise!

## ITEMS

- Eco-friendly [Gratitude Journal](#) with writing prompts.
- [Yoga Cats Wall Calendar](#)
- My favorite lightweight [Eye Mask](#), and [White Noise Machine](#).