

Daily Renewal Program
developed by
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The Daily Renewal Program is like a spiritual multi-vitamin that helps you stay in balance and focused on your goals throughout each day. This mind-body-spirit strategy only takes a few minutes several times a day. It's actually a combination of several extremely effective strategies that you can easily incorporate into your lifestyle.

People who practice the Daily Renewal Program are amazed at how quickly they begin to see results. Depending on your diligence, you can realize results in only one day. You will feel more in control, more focused, and more able to think more clearly. It even helps you get out of your "autopilot" mode and into the mode of consciously deciding what your next healthy action might be. It interrupts the build-up of stress and struggle so you can consciously choose to focus on finding the miracles and gifts in your day. When you see how much better you feel, you'll know that it's worth it.

The basic *Daily Renewal Program* involves four steps:

- Begin each day with the Peaceful Wake-Up Call.
Time: 1-3 minutes
- Practice Healing Breathe Work every hour (at least 8 times) while you breathe through any area of tension and say your affirmations.
Time: 1-3 minutes
- Meditate once a day.
Time: 15 minutes
- End the day with the Evening Ritual
Time: 1-3 minutes

Doing the very minimum, the whole *Daily Renewal Program* only has to take as little as 25 minutes broken up over the course of a day. When you see how much better you feel you'll know that it's worth it.

Now you might be a little skittish about the concept of meditating. No, you don't have to be on the top of a mountain in a loin cloth muttering funny sounds. Meditation is really very simple and extremely effective. You have many options so keep an open mind and see what's involved.

Each component of *The Daily Renewal Program* is briefly outlined below with more detail provided in *The Stress Management Handbook: Strategies for Health and Inner Peace*.

Peaceful Wake-Up Call

Are you the type of person who gets up in the morning, stumbles into the shower, and then blindly heads toward the coffee maker in search of a jump start to the morning? Instead of relying on your first cup of coffee or tea to get your day started, why not try a more conscious, more peaceful approach.

Try practicing a morning wake-up ritual that can guide you into your day with a sense of gratitude and connection with the Divine. This kind of ritual is also a useful tool for centering yourself and opening you to the gifts and miracles of the day ahead.

Strategy:

Each morning just when you wake up and before you even get out of bed:

- *Breathe* — Take a few moments to become aware of your breathing, practicing a few diaphragmatic breaths. (See below)
- *Body Awareness* — As you do this, bring your attention to and become aware of each part of your body.
- *Affirmations* — Repeat any affirmations you may be working on. (See below).
- *Intention* — Then set your intention for the day. Your intention can be as simple as: “My intention is to move through the day as easily and effortlessly as possible.” Or you might say a prayer, a verse or a phrase that has meaning for you. Perhaps the best intention you can make each day is to look for the Divine miracles and gifts in your day that will support you and guide you in creating an exceptional day.
- *Gratitude* — Next, take a few moments to focus on what you have to be grateful for. If you have trouble finding a place to start, start with your ability to see, hear, touch, taste, smell, walk, and talk, and move on from there. Try thinking of one thing you’ve never thought of to be grateful for.
- *Connection with the Divine* — Finally, if you’re comfortable with this, you can bring your attention to your connection with the Divine, however you imagine that to be. There are countless ways to do this. You might try simply focusing on the words, “God (insert your word for God) loves me unconditionally.” If you have a hard time feeling this connection use this as an opportunity to add dimension and depth to your connection with the Divine. You can also visualize this connection by focusing on a beam of loving energy flowing from your heart to God (or your image of the Divine) and from God to you.

Healing Breath Work

Breathing is the one stress management tool we have available to us at every moment — no matter how intense our stress experience is. In fact, using healing breath work may be the single, most elegant technique we have to relax our mind, our body and our spirit. Healing breath work interrupts the stress response, triggers the flow of relaxing endorphins, and helps us become aware of our negative, stressful thoughts. It’s like putting the mental clutch in so we can take a moment to consciously decide what healthy action we can take to manage our stress.

The problem is that most of us breathe very shallowly and even hold our breath without being aware of it so healing breath work takes a little practice. For more detail on the physiology of breathing and other techniques see *The Stress Management Handbook*.

Strategy:

Use the following exercise to become familiar and comfortable with the basics of proper breathing. Continued practice is required in order to train your body to make abdominal breathing a natural reflex. Keep in mind that the ultimate goal is to make a majority of your 24,000 daily breaths abdominal ones. For now however, practice as often as you can and consider focusing on various ways you can remind yourself to breathe properly.

Three Part Breath

You may try this exercise either sitting or lying down, or try it both ways to see which way allows you to notice the three parts of the breathing rhythm. You may experience

awkwardness at first as you get used to the rhythm but this will disappear with practice.

- Inhale slowly and as completely as possible as you expand first the belly (below the navel), then the abdomen and finally the chest.
- Hold for a few moments before exhaling.
- Exhale in reverse pattern, slowly emptying the belly, abdomen and chest.
- Hold for a few moments before inhaling.
- Repeat 10 times the first few times you practice and then build up to a point where you feel comfortable with the process.
- If you find yourself feeling stressed or anxious continue to breathe like this until you feel more in control or more relaxed. If, at any time, you begin to feel stressed again just start your breathing technique and remember how much more in control and relaxed it makes you feel.

Meditation/Relaxation Training

Meditation lowers our metabolism, our heart rate and blood pressure, slows our brain waves, allows endorphins to flow through our body, and brings oxygen to our brain. Why is this important? Because in doing so, meditation naturally reverses the negative effects of stress by boosting our immune system and bringing all the major systems in our body to balance. Meditators also experience the following emotional benefits:

- able to think more clearly
- less jittery
- lowered sense of urgency
- increased energy
- productivity and efficiency
- decreased feelings of pressure
- more open emotionally
- less defensive
- decrease in mild depression
- decrease in anxiety
- clearer thinking
- easier to get along with
- less irritable
- less critical of self and others
- less influenced by others

Meditators also experience a reduction in the intensity and severity for physical conditions including:

- Hypertension
- Coronary Heart Disease
- Gastrointestinal Disorders
- Sleep Disorders
- Headache
- Diabetes
- Asthma
- Cancer
- AIDs/HIV
- Allergies
- Skin Disorders
- Premenstrual Syndrome
- Parkinsons Disease
- Lupus
- Pain
- Infertility
- Anxiety
- Anger
- Hostility
- Depression

Strategy:

You can begin to accomplish this for yourself by developing a daily 15-minute meditation practice. As you prepare for and practice meditation keep in mind the following:

- Make meditation your express intention by setting aside the time to do it.
- Find a quiet, comfortable place where you will not be disturbed.

- Find a comfortable position in which it is possible to relax your muscles.
- Select a centering device (a focus for your attention as a means of stopping the mental chatter). Try one the following or refer to chapter 13 for more options.
 - Your breath can be a centering device. Simply practice healing breath work. Focus your awareness on each part of the breath as you are experiencing it — from inhale, to exhale, to the pauses between each inhale and exhale. Become aware of the rhythm of your breathing and just observe the process of breathing. If your mind wanders, simply bring it back gently to your breath.
 - Purchase a meditation tape/CD at your local bookstore (even grocery stores have them!) and listen to a guided meditation.
- Adopt a passive attitude. This involves letting go of thoughts and feelings as they enter your awareness and gently returning to your centering device.

Affirmations

Affirmations are a great way to combat the stress we create for ourselves with our negative thinking. Repeating affirmations actually helps us re-program ourselves with more objective, positive thoughts so the brain is not sending danger signals to the body needlessly.

Affirmations can also help us learn to:

- Have compassion for ourselves even when we think we've made a mistake or failed in some way.
- Talk to ourselves in a comforting and nurturing way.
- Talk ourselves out of being anxious or fearful in situations where we might be distorting our thinking.
- Sincerely acknowledge and honor our own successes.

Strategy

Here's what you need to do to create affirmations for yourself:

- Create a positive statement, in the present tense, about what you *want* to be experiencing.
- Make sure the statement is personal by using "I" statements and by making the statement meaningful to you, both in the words you choose and the intention and commitment you feel about what it is you want.
- Make sure the statement is positive and that it contains no negative words like "not," "never," etc.
- Affirmation examples might be:
 - I am calm and relaxed.
 - I feel peaceful and centered.
 - My breathing is deep and regular.
 - I am breathing in calming energy and exhaling tension.
 - My mind, my emotions and my body are at peace.
 - I choose to create balance and harmony in my life.
 - I am in control of my mind, my emotions and my body.
 - I manage my stress effectively.
 - I am creating everything I need for my health, happiness and well-being.

The Evening Ritual

End the day the way you started, turning the Peaceful Wake-Up Call into an evening ritual to fall asleep by.

*Please visit www.Magical-Living.com for more tools and strategies
to help you create magic in your life.*