

Lead With **JOY**

7 Powerful Practices
for putting JOY in the
Drivers Seat!



Hey There Sister Joy-Seeker!

Did you know that joy is an inner feeling while happiness is an outward expression? Another way to look at it is that joy is of the soul, while happiness is of the moment.

You can have happy moments without joy being in the lead, but... guilt, depletion, and self-doubt will lurk close by – ready to pound the next “you should be doing” into your head, moving you further away from what truly matters most to you.

For hundreds of years, women have been socially conditioned (*social conditioning is the process of training people to respond in a manner generally approved by society*) **to ‘people please,’ to take care of, fix, and be it all to everyone.** This serves no one, least of all yourself.

WITH JOY IN THE LEAD:

- Time for ‘what matters most’ increases – *joy becomes your baseline way of feeling.*
- A sense of freedom grows – *liberating you from the burden of “not enough.”*
- You become YOU – *no longer a version influenced by others.*
- Clarity and confidence expand – *along with ease.*

Ready to be astounded? Try this: Bring awareness to how often you say to yourself: “I should, I have to, I need to.” How does this make you feel? *Experiment with asking “what is it I want?”*



IT'S YOUR TIME TO THRIVE!

My client, jewelry designer Stephanie Benson shared this in response to our work together: “When I do things for my own happiness and joy, the world responds. Giving myself permission to just ‘be’ and not get caught up in the busy-ness of life creates more expansiveness.”

Ahh... expansiveness. Breathe this in and know it's yours for the taking. Read on!

Wafting joy sparkles your way!

Suzy

The Seven Steps - At a Glance:

"As we let our light shine, we consciously give other people permission to do the same. As we are liberated from our own fear, our presence actually liberates others."

~Marianne Williamson

SUGGESTION: Read through this mini-guide [a 15-minute read] while being mindful of which step feels the most supportive for you right now. Each step includes an explanation, a bit of story, and a daily practice to integrate.

IDEAS FOR INTEGRATING STEPS:

- Choose one step to practice and do that for a while. When it feels right, add in another.
- Begin a seven-week practice with a focus on one step each week.
- Joy loves company: Grab a friend and work the steps together, with a weekly 'accountability' check-in to share what you've noticed, what you've learned, and what you've received as a result of the practice.

#1: Practice Mindfulness - Choose one daily action to be mindful of.

#2: Choose you! What's your one thing?

#3: Let it go! Surrender - surrender - surrender.

#4: Be your own best friend - Talk nicely to yourself.

#5: Stop the 'Doom Loops'! Re-frame your thoughts.

#6: Practice Sacred Selfishness - Make yourself a non-negotiable priority.

#7: Ego vs. Soul, Daily 'check-in'. Remember... your soul wants you to soar!



Rock on Joy Seekers!

Yup, that's me... I was born for joy, but the 'shoulds,' perpetuated by social conditioning, took me down the road of hard knocks. It's FABULOUS to be back in the saddle again!

Step 1: Practice Mindfulness

“Few of us ever live in the present. We are forever anticipating what is to come or remembering what has gone.” ~Louis L’Amour

Mindfulness is purposeful attention to your actions, reactions, emotions, and thoughts while remaining nonjudgmental. It's from this purposeful place that you begin to know yourself and discover your unique inner beauty, laying the foundation for loving yourself unconditionally.

To fully understand mindfulness, let's explore mindlessness. Have you ever arrived at a destination and barely remembered getting there? Or have you eaten a meal only to discover an empty plate and not remember the taste and texture of the food? Mindfulness is the art of being purposefully present. *Like all art forms - mindfulness takes practice.*

Mindfulness is slowing down to fully experience the present. No judgement.
Observing and learning is the first step to growing.

Daily Practice #1:

Each day for the next seven days (or more), choose one action to be mindful of.

Ideas...

Eating – chew slowly, and experience the taste, texture, and smells.

Interacting with people – how do you feel, think, and act?

Walking – what sounds do you hear, what smells, what sites do you see?

JOY TIP:

In the morning, write down your mindfulness intention for the day. At the end of the day, write down what you observed. Did the food taste richer? Did you feel more connected to someone? What sounds, colors and smells did you notice on your walk?

Step 2: Choose You!

"It's not how much we give but how much love we put into giving." ~Mother Teresa

How often do you say, "I don't have time," for something you want to do? Women are taught to put everyone else first and themselves second to last. *Nurture yourself so that when you give and connect, you genuinely give and connect from the heart.*

Giving from a place of resentment is not giving; it's spreading the energy of depletion.

Many years ago, I was volunteering and overheard another volunteer proudly state that she was missing her child's concert to volunteer. *On that day, thirty-five years ago, I made a decision to put family first. But, I missed something important - 'me.'*

Joy isn't exclusive - real joy, the kind that shines from the inside out (soul shine), emerges when embracing all emotions and getting curious: *Why am I angry and frustrated? Why do I feel hurt and sad? Why do I feel happy for no reason at all (anchor that one in!)?*

Feel - Reveal - Heal.

When I begin to feel depleted, I know this is a sign to refuel and say "no" to others and "yes" to me.

Is it easy? Not always. But with practice, it does get easier to catch depletion before it spirals out of control.

JOY TIP

When you focus on feeding your soul, your joy lens is much clearer, and you're more present.

Step 2: Daily Practice

What's Your One Thing?

Choose one thing for "you" that feeds your heart and soul daily. *Whether it's reading a chapter in a book you love, taking time to quietly sip a cup of tea, walking around the block, or simply taking ten luxurious minutes of doing nothing - eyes closed, breathe deeply - relax.*

Step 3: Let Go – Surrender

“All surrender means is to give up the fight” ~Sivan Garr

Be mindful of your emotions and internal self-talk:

- Are you making mountains out of molehills?
- Churning the same thought over and over?
- Feel your insides clench down?

JOY TIP:

Take three deep breaths - *in through the nose, out through the mouth* while saying:

“I surrender, I surrender, I surrender”.

Why? Because making mountains out of molehills is no fun and leaves you scrambling on the hamster wheel. Surrendering hits the pause button, opens the exit door and allows the light to shine in!

Not only is surrendering a calming move, it's also a smart business/leadership/cool human thing to do! Disengage your low-energy vibration and engage your higher-energy vibration - it's good for you and for those around you too!

Step 3: Daily Practice

Surrendering is powerful! As a former world class thought-churner, learning how to let go, changed my life and it will change yours as well.

LISTEN & FEEL. Your body knows when you're struggling. Is your jaw clenched, your tummy in knots, and your head hurting? What are your physical signs of 'struggle' (aka stress)?

Break the cycle and change directions at a moment's notice by saying, “I surrender, I surrender, I surrender”. *Breathe, let go, relax and trust.*

“In the end, just three things matter: How well we have lived, How well we have loved, How well we have learned to let go”

-Jack Kornfield

Step 4: Whatcha talkin' about?

“Having a low opinion of your self is not “modesty”. It’s self-destruction. Holding your uniqueness in high regard is not “egotism”. It’s a necessary precondition to happiness and success” ~Bobbe Sommer

Are you your own best friend or worst enemy?

- What do you say about yourself?
- How do you talk to yourself?
- What is your inner dialogue about yourself?
- Would you talk to someone else the way you speak to yourself?

With every non-supportive thought, you're re-enforcing beliefs, habits, and thought patterns. *You're training your brain to think poorly about yourself - yikes!*

Step 5: Reframe, Reframe, Reframe

“Change your thoughts and change your world” ~ Norman Vincent Peale

Reframing is a technique to help create a different way of looking at a situation.

EXAMPLE: I once ended a conversation by saying: "I'm sorry I blabbered on for so long." My astute friend offered this reframe: "Thank you for witnessing my amazing life!" *Feels better, doesn't it?!*

We all have them - *thoughts that sneak in without notice.* I call these 'thought loops' or 'doom loops.' Reframing is a key step to re-wiring your neural pathways for joy.

Reframing requires mindfulness. When I began practicing mindfulness, I was astonished at how often a negative thought slipped in.

Step 4 & 5: Daily Practice

A: Catch your thought - *Watcha Talkin' About?*

B: Reframe it. Anchor it - write your old and new (reframed) thought loop in your journal.

****Reframing can feel uncomfortable; after all, you were conditioned to be humble, not to talk yourself up. With practice, Reframing stops "shoulding on yourself," opening space for joy to move in!**

JOY TIP:

Be like a fly-fisherwoman - visualize catching your non-supportive thought, releasing... and then bragging proudly to a friend about that big 'catch.' *(Permission to exaggerate!)*

Step 6: Sacred Selfishness

Sacred Selfishness: *"The practice of putting yourself first, and giving to yourself first, so you have more to give to the world, but not from a place of resentment and depletion - from a place of health and happiness!" ~Suzy Carroll*

The word 'selfish' was not part of my vocabulary until 2011, when I attended a retreat called Sacred Success®, led by my dear friend Barbara Huson (Stanny). As the retreat came to a close, she asked us to share our purpose.

We each took a turn sharing our version of how we wanted to impact the world positively, that is, until one brave woman said with tears in her eyes, ***"I want to be selfish. I want to do what I love. I want to create and grow my business."***

There was a collective exhale, silence, and then cheers rippled around the table as we all absorbed the truth - **heck ya, we want to make an impact, but hot damn, we wanted to be selfish for ourselves too!**

By the way, this woman's business went on to be extraordinarily successful, bringing joy to many!

I took the word Selfish (which still felt uncomfortable), attached Sacred (I was, after all, at a retreat called Sacred Success), and ran with it. **As I embodied the practice of Sacred Selfishness**, my life began to shift and change beyond what I ever could have imagined.

Sacred, as defined by Merriam-Webster: *Entitled to reverence and respect. Highly valued and important.* Two worthwhile questions to ask yourself are:

- Do you value yourself?
- Do you view yourself with reverence and love?

JOY TIP:

By integrating the practice of Sacred Selfishness, you become: healthier, happier, and consistently energized, and you feel good about yourself! This is the type of energy that shifts average into great and takes leadership and life to a whole other level - not to mention - *puts joy in your driver's seat!*

Step 6: Daily Practice

Make your well-being a non-negotiable priority!
Begin your practice of Sacred Selfishness™

"I bless the world because I bless myself" ~The Course in Miracles

Step 7: Ego verses Soul

I once had a fitness trainer who said, "*check your ego at the door.*"

As your mindfulness practice grows, it becomes easier to notice when your marching orders are coming from your ego and when they're coming from your soul.

When I began the mindfulness practice of recognizing ego vs. soul, I discovered that when I felt drained, on edge, unsettled, or when I fell into self-comparison, and my nemesis... not good enough, it was often because my ego was in the lead - not my soul.

Here's a few ideas of how ego and soul shows up:

*Excerpt from the book 'Sacred Success': A Course in Financial Miracles by Barbara Huson
(Shared with permission)*

- The ego is about image ~ The soul is about authenticity.
- The ego makes excuses ~ The soul takes action.
- The ego always speaks first ~ The soul is quiet and listens.
- The ego focuses on flaw ~ The soul reminds you of your divine gifts.
- The ego can't take constructive criticism ~ The soul seeks it out and welcomes it.
- The ego wants to be seen as the best ~ The soul wants to keep getting better.
- The ego encourages us to hide ~ The soul encourages us to shine!
- The ego tries to control the message ~ The soul trusts the message to take on a life of its own.
- The ego talks ~ The soul looks and listens.
- The ego competes and dominates ~ The soul co-creates.
- The ego lives from scarcity ~ The soul lives from abundance.
- The ego protects you ~ The Soul wants you to soar.
- The ego cares only about the end performance ~ The soul is in love with the process.

Step 7: Daily Practice

At the end of your day ask yourself these questions:

When was I in ego?

How did that feel?

What could I do differently?

Your Seven Daily Practices

Suggestion: Print & post this page for a daily reminder.

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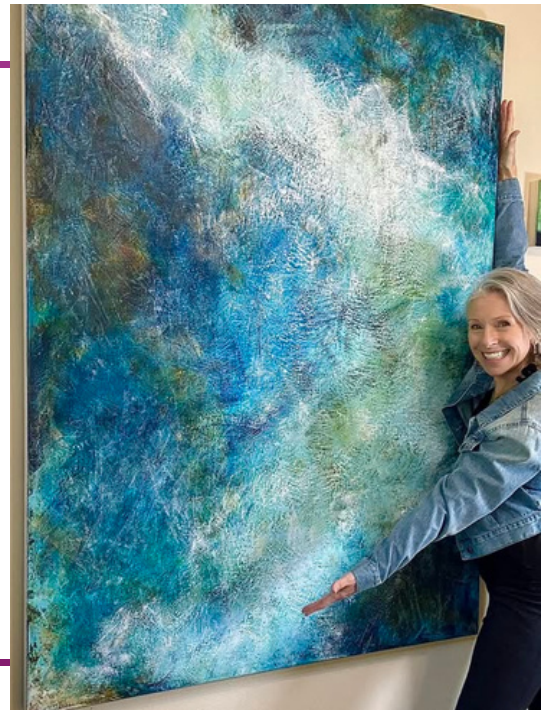
Practice #6: Practice Sacred Selfishness - Make yourself a non-negotiable priority.

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I truly walked my talk—right into a new chapter as an abstract artist! While I'm no longer coaching, I'm happy to recommend a few amazing coaches I know personally. Feel free to visit www.suzycarroll.com to learn more!

TO VIEW ARTWORK: www.suzycarroll.com



"I was able to identify all the ways I limit myself, to look at self-sabotaging behaviors, and to explore the reasons behind my lack of confidence around my work...Through this [mentoring] program I really recognized how important the work I'm doing is to me, and I've started putting myself out in the world with more confidence."

*Carrie Andrews, Advanced Care Planning & Patient Advocacy,
www.peaceofmind.com*



She takes you deep into a realm, most of us don't explore, but it's crucial, to reach the point of clarity I was seeking. She taught me to look at life from a more positive, mindful perspective, and gave me the very important tools & confidence to make new transformative habits. She is the best mentor ever!!!"

-Kirsten Campbell