

Journey Forward



but I am not sure who I am outside of that role

3. I would like to create more personal meaning in my life (outside of my family or work) but don't know where to start
4. I don't know what I'm going to do with myself when my kids are grown and out of the house
5. My relationships (with friends and/or spouse) lack depth; they feel fake, on the surface, or superficial, and I'm wanting/needing more
6. I am not sure what brings me joy or contentment at this point of my life
7. I feel like I have no time for myself, and end up putting myself last
8. I don't know how to ask for help from others because I feel like I "should" be able to do it all on my own
9. I constantly feel stressed and anxious
10. I'm always being pulled in different directions and I don't know where to put my attention first, so I often just get stuck and don't feel accomplished by the end of the day
11. I feel like something in my life isn't "right" but don't know where to begin to figure what it is or even *how* to begin to make change even if I wanted to
12. I am always tired and can't ever seem to catch up to feel rested or refreshed
13. I am unhappy with my weight and it is making me feel bad about myself
14. I'm worried that "this is as good as it gets" and it's not what I thought/wished/hoped it would be
15. I'm not happy or fulfilled with only being a stay-at-home-mom
16. I'm always worried about the future, and it is taking me out of being present with myself and others around me that I care about
17. I worry if I've made the right life choices
18. I have optimism that things will get better, but it feels like nothing ever changes, and I end up feeling sad and resigned
19. Parenting is much harder than I thought it would be, and I'm worried I'm f***ing up my kids
20. I don't know who I am; maybe I never even knew
21. I feel guilty for not being grateful enough for what I have, because even though I have a good life, I just don't feel fulfilled
22. I feel selfish when I take time away from my loved ones to do something for me
23. I'm not sure what my marriage will be like when my kids are off to college; I worry we will have nothing in common anymore

24. I'm afraid if I made a significant change in my life (like getting a divorce or switching careers) that I'd be giving up comfort and security for an unknown, and fear I wouldn't know if it was worth it
25. I don't know when good is good enough
26. I feel stuck in the stories or beliefs from my past that have defined who I am; I don't want that old narrative to continue to define or control me, and I don't know how to create a new one
27. I have a hard time letting go of guilt and shame from choices I've made in the past and I feel like my "punishment" is to live the rest of my life "paying" for those choices
28. I feel like I keep getting stuck in the same patterns that don't work for me, and I don't know how to create new ones
29. I worry I have lost the chance, or that it's too late, to make any meaningful change in my life
30. I want to be happier

Did any of these statements resonate deeply with you?

Are you saying to yourself right now, "Wait?!?! You mean I'm not the only one???? OMG, how'd you know what I've been thinking and how I've been feeling?? You totally get me and where I'm at!!!"

If so, it's because **you are not alone**. I've been there, and I totally understand you!! And even better...**I can help you!!**

Through the practices of:

Increasing **AWARENESS** of your present moment experiences:
thoughts, emotions, sensations, or distractions

while

Paying **ATTENTION** to your typical habits, patterns, reactions,
tendencies, and mindsets

and

Setting the **INTENTION** to take small, daily action steps towards lasting change that is directly connected to your values...

...You will JOURNEY FORWARD, transforming out of where you are stuck and living the life you want and have been dreaming of. It is not only POSSIBLE, but ATTAINABLE!!

That elusive “one day” is NOW! Keep reading to discover the roadmap that'll get your friends wondering just how you've made such a positive shift in your life...

Okay, take a deep breath, and let's get started!

STEP 1: Go back through the list of 30 items. Circle the **top 5 most pressing struggles, concerns, or challenges** that you are facing right now, keeping you stuck. If there are others that you are experiencing, but they aren't on the list, make note, and you can write those down below.

Okay, go ahead, circle them, then come back...I'll wait...

Good job! I really honor your ability to look deeper into where you are stuck, and what is holding you back from being your best, most present, self. It takes courage and vulnerability to delve into your pain points, and it's your ability to do so that will free you and get you to where you want to be in your life.

Wanna know a truth? **That which we resist, persists.**

The more we focus on the negative, the bigger that negative becomes. And it's not your fault – our brains are designed to focus on the negative. So, you simply need to practice viewing your challenges in a new way and learn how to create a new relationship to what is difficult. (And that's what I'm here to teach you; lucky you!) The practice is **observe what is arising (thoughts, emotions, sensations, distractions)**, without allowing it to take over and consume you. When you can cultivate this “observer-mind,” you create space between you and what is coming up – and in that space lies the freedom to respond and not react, to whatever is occurring in the moment. **Reactions are habitual and usually unskillful.**

Responses are intentional and in alignment with who you are and where you want to be. It's a practice to learn these skills. You won't get there overnight; with patience and persistence, you can and you will. I believe in you!

Okay, so back to the practice. Now that you've circled your 5 statements (or come up with your own), write them below:

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

5. _____

STEP 2: As you look over the above list, I would like for you to **notice – without judgment, but with self-compassion – what emotions or sensations are arising in your body**; just notice. When you can practice giving space and allowing (with self-kindness!!!), along with naming what you are feeling, it prevents you from over-identifying with (or defining yourself by) the emotion or feeling you are experiencing. “Naming it” has been shown to slow your brain’s reaction to what you are experiencing; it throws a monkey wrench into your habit of it taking over and offers you the *pause* to slow down and respond. For example, note your bodily sensations, such as, a tightness in your chest, a pit in your stomach, an increased heart rate, or a sense of overwhelm. Or make note of the emotions, giving them a label such as: anxiety, sadness, hurt, sad, anger, distraught, wistful... Write down how you are feeling and/or what you are noticing:

STEP 3: Now, **increase awareness of your thoughts, beliefs, or mindsets** that are coming up for you. For example, you might be thinking, “Things will never

change; it's just the way things are; this is just who I am." Or, "I'm not worthy/capable/deserving of feeling happier." Or maybe it's "I'm too afraid or fearful of change, so I'll just stick with the status quo, even though I don't like it." Write down the thoughts, beliefs, or mindsets you are having (or often have):

Notice how quickly we can enter into self-judgment, limiting beliefs, or unskillful reactions about ourselves or our situations. I want to remind you that **thoughts are just thoughts. You don't need to believe them.** (And by the way, your mind produces between 50,000-70,000 thoughts per day; could you imagine if we believed all of them?!) The intention is to increase awareness – with self-compassion – of how your mind's normal tendencies and habits keep you stuck. Your thoughts are very powerful, and to create lasting change, you need to practice the ability to just observe what is coming up for you (thoughts, emotions, judgments), without automatically believing them; strengthening this practice gives you tremendous power and ability to live your life in the way that serves you best!

STEP 4: Now that you've observed and increased awareness of what is coming up, we need to calm down your brain and calm down your body, which will not only help you feel better, but allow your executive functioning (logic, reasoning, decision making, clarity of mind) to work at it's optimal level. (BTW, did you know, that when your emotions start to take over, it shuts down your executive function? Crazy just how much our minds and bodies are connected!!) So let's practice **mindful breathing** by taking at least **5 deep breaths**. Close your eyes, take a deep breath in, hold it for a moment, and as you exhale out, intentionally let go of those limiting beliefs and judgments that are not serving you. Make it a conscious choice that each exhalation will bring the opportunity to release

whatever is preventing you from journeying forward. And by doing this, you are creating space for what you want to bring in. Continue slowly, with all 5 breaths, allowing each exhale to be a bit longer than the one before it.

My favorite mantra when breathing is to say to myself, “**I breathe in all that nourishes and heals me, and I breathe out all that is spent.**” Try it! I love connecting the words to my breath; it helps to keep focus on my breath and prevent my mind from wandering too much.

Did you take the 5 mindful breaths? How do you feel? (Don’t worry if you don’t feel any different, or if you feel a bit more stressed and overwhelmed; connecting with our breath and having it calm us is a practice in and of itself.)

Another essential component during this breathwork is to bring in self-compassion, which is the practice of treating yourself like your own best friend. We all have an inner critic who can be very loud, so we need to replace that inner critic with a voice of self-compassion, which is to say, “This is really hard right now. This feeling is not permanent. I am already getting through this.”

Change does not happen overnight; there is no magic – it’s a practice, which requires patience and persistence, and along with the belief that things can change. But you’re off to a great start!! Making a **daily habit of connecting to your breath** is a wonderful tool to calm your brain and body, while inherently drawing you back into the present moment. If you notice your mind wander to the dark side, with awareness and self-compassion, simply invite it back, using your breath as an anchor to the here and now.

STEP 5: Okay, now you’re ready to **reframe where you are stuck and uncover your deeper values** that are hidden behind them. (See Appendix for a list of values.) Often, we feel so stuck because a value is being violated – that’s why it’s so hard!! So, here are some examples of how to make the mindset shift from a challenge to discover your values:

- Challenge: “I am unhappy with my weight and it is making me feel bad about myself.” *Value: I value taking care of my body and my health, and I value feeling a positive connection to my body.*
- Challenge: “I feel selfish when I take time away from my loved ones to do something for just me.” *Value: I value caring for others as well as honoring time for myself.*

- Challenge: “I’m not happy or fulfilled with only being a stay-at-home-mom.” *Value: I value making a positive contribution to society and/or contributing financially to the home.*
- Challenge: “I constantly feel stressed and anxious.” *Value: I value feeling at peace in my mind and body.*
- Challenge: “I would like to create more personal meaning in my life (outside of my family or work) but don’t know where to start.” *Value: I value depth, connection and growth.*

Can you begin to see how to look for the value hidden behind where you are stuck? It may be hard at first and may require some time and thought. So, go ahead, take the time to dig deep. Within this process is the real **work towards emotional freedom**. If it appears that there is no way to reframe your challenge as a value, then come back to it at a later time. Give yourself time to sit with it. The intention is to practice looking at your struggles in a new way, one that highlights what is meaningful for you. When you are able to practice this, you will have a greater ability to grow from, rather than get stuck focusing and dwelling on the negative, allowing you to step towards creating tangible, lasting change. **Remember, if you start to feel flooded or overwhelmed, go back to Steps 2 - 4, and practice mindfulness, self-compassion, and breathing.** Mindfulness is at the heart of the matter: the awareness of noticing what’s arising, without judgment, and then coming back into the present moment, your breath and your body. Alright, let’s give it a try; write down your values as connected to each of the statements from above:

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

5. _____

There is a great saying: **Pain is inevitable, but suffering is optional.** You can't control what arises, but you can control how you respond to it. Remember that. This is where your power lies.

Think about how using this framework would help you when you are getting stuck: How might you respond differently to the people and/or situations around you? Would you be less reactive and/or stressed? Would you be able to be more present and enjoy your life, even if it is hard and overwhelming? I believe that through mindfulness and mindset shifts, you will be serving your greater needs of peace, balance, joy, and presence.

Let me drive this in with another example: If you and your spouse are always fighting, what value might be behind it? I'm guessing that you value feeling validated, heard, and understood, and being a relationship in which there is peaceful communication and reciprocity. If you entered into an argument remembering your value set, how might you communicate differently? Would you be more effective in what you had to say? Would you listen with more empathy and compassion, and have a more open-hearted approach in problem solving? Again, it might not change in what arguments are happening, but your awareness will be able to shift you into new patterns that are more in alignment with your higher self and deeper needs, creating stronger relationships.

Please note: It's possible you might come up against competing values. For example, if you are trying to develop a healthier connection to your body, your values might be self-care and health, which at times may be at odds. Maybe you beat yourself up for not going to the gym because you slept in. This is again where self-compassion is a crucial part of your practice. Treat yourself with kindness.

STEP 6: The last step is to **set intentions: moment-to-moment, daily or weekly, action items that will step you towards living in alignment with your values.** With awareness comes responsibility. Now that you are more aware of how your challenges can easily lead to a set of limiting beliefs, mindsets or habits that keep you stuck, you have a choice to make: You can either stay stuck, knowing that it's familiar and you know how to do it (even though you don't like it!!) or you can

choose to step forward – with intention – down a new path, creating new habits of responding, rather than the habitual reacting or resisting. Setting intentions has been shown to be a powerful and effective way to reach your goal (there are some brain science-y explanations I can give, but if you want to know more, research “reticular activation system”).

Make a list below of small, easy, actionable items that you can commit to doing. Set yourself up for success, so start smart and start small with attainable items you can have successful follow through with.

Here are some examples:

- If your value is being healthy, and you struggle with your body image, then the intention would be to **spend 5 minutes in the morning** doing a set of exercises to start building strength and flexibility.
- If you’re stuck feeling anxious, and your value is to feel peaceful, then your intention would be to commit to slowing down and **focusing on your breath for 1 minute per day, while challenging the thoughts that arise.**
- If you are unhappy in your relationship and feel like your spouse doesn’t hear you when you speak, then set the intention to really **listen to him/her with an open, compassionate heart**, and clarify what s/he says with curiosity, rather than reacting with judgment.
- If you find yourself always yelling at your kids, and your value is to role model the behaviors you wish to see in them, then set the intention to **slow down and pause to breathe before raising your voice.**

So, go ahead - write down your intentions below, as connected to the values you listed above. These can be something you want to do daily or weekly. Make sure that you are writing down clear intentions and goals that you can have success with – start small with something you will be able to accomplish.

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

5. _____

Are you beginning to see how to apply these 6-steps, and the benefit in reframing your challenges to discover your values? **Mindfulness is a key component** – practicing awareness, attention, and intention, along with self-compassion and mindful breathing practices – and will allow you to shift into new patterns. You will begin to adopt new, small, daily habits that are in line with your values and you'll have transformed from being stuck, to staying unstuck so you can live fully and freely!

I'm so proud of you to have begun this process, and I'm honored to have guided you along the way. I encourage you to not stop here...this is just the beginning! Keep coming back to these 6-steps and eventually they will form as habit.

To continue the momentum, I recommend cultivating a **daily mindfulness practice**. (If you aren't sure how, I've got your back...check out some of my options below...)

Secondly, allow the following questions to be your guiding light. They are part of your purpose...and feel free to add more of similar questions.

- How will your life feel different when you don't allow your struggles to define you?
- Where will you put your energy towards, once you've been freed up from worrying, agonizing, or ruminating?
- In what ways will your relationships improve by you showing up more present, open-hearted, and compassionate?
- What would it feel like to live in alignment with your highest values?

And lastly, if you think this was a valuable start on your **Journey Forward**, then let's keep going! I've got plenty more to share! Connect with me on social media to stay up to date on all my offerings. Instagram: @sassygirlmeditates and on Facebook: facebook.com/joreerose33/

I am so proud of you for taking the time to invest in your future self. You just took amazing steps forward in learning the tools to journey forward into living your best, most authentic and fulfilled life.

I can't wait to continue the journey we have started together! My life changed in beautiful ways when I started tuning into what wasn't working, began to operate from a framework in which I was able to be more mindful, self-compassionate and create lasting change. I'll be honest – it doesn't happen overnight. But what does happen overnight is the decision to stop living in a way that is not working for you; to stop feeling like a victim to circumstance. I promise – the universe has your back and I'm here to help you tap into your power and your purpose.

Thanks for trusting in me to help you get there!

In deep gratitude and love,

~Joree Rose

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Appendix – A List of Value Words



Acceptance	Equality	Intention	Reverence
Adventure	Excitement	Intimacy	Rhythm
Attention	Expansiveness	Intuition	Risk
Authenticity	Exploration	Joy	Security
Awareness	Experience	Justice	Self-compassion
Balance	Family	Kindness	Self-expression
Beauty	Faith	Leadership	Sensuality
Belonging	Fitness	Learning	Serenity
Calm	Flow	Love	Sexuality
Capability	Forgiveness	Loyalty	Spirituality
Caring	Freedom	Magic	Spontaneity
Comfort	Friendship	Meaning	Stability
Commitment	Fulfillment	Nature	Stewardship
Communication	Fun	Nurture	Strength
Compassion	Giving	Openness	Structure
Confidence	Growth	Order	Sustainability
Connection	Happiness	Organization	Thoughtfulness
Courage	Health	Patience	Tolerance
Creativity	Honor	Peace	Transcendence
Curiosity	Humor	Play	Understanding
Depth	Imagination	Power	Warmth
Detachment	Independence	Productivity	Wisdom
Discipline	Integrity	Reliability	Wit
Effort	Intelligence	Respect	Wonder