



# MINDFUL OVER MINDLESS

HOW TO SAY  
YES TO YOURSELF  
IN 7 SIMPLE STEPS

ABBEY FATICA

# **TABLE OF CONTENTS**

**Introduction**

**STEP 1: Visualize Your Goals**

**STEP 2: Write In A Gratitude Notebook**

**STEP 3: Take 3 Deep Breaths**

**STEP 4: Journal Your Thoughts**

**STEP 5: Find 5 Minutes of Quiet Time**

**STEP 6: Speak Positively To Yourself**

**STEP 7: Move Your Body**

**BONUS: Exercise Your Brain**

# INTRODUCTION

## Say YES to Yourself

Before you close the window because you saw there are 7 steps to this process, hear me out. You immediately thought, "I don't have time for this." You rarely go to the bathroom solo, let alone have the opportunity to get time to yourself, but stay with me because I'm going to show you how it can be done.

Baby steps. It will take one step at a time. As a mom of four, being able to complete each of these 7 steps on a daily basis didn't happen overnight but eventually I got there.

Baby steps. You wouldn't tell a baby to quit trying to walk because they fall down, would you? No, you encourage them to keep going. They are going to do it anyways because they are determined to learn this skill. They won't necessarily learn it in one day either but they keep working at it until it becomes second nature.

### IS THIS FOR ME????

The first step isn't even on this list but it is the most important one. It's requires you to say YES to yourself. You need to be in a place where regular self-care is a priority. You don't have to know how or what to do, but you something needs to change.

## **AM I READY TO GET STARTED?**

Ask yourself the following questions and if you say YES to any of them, you are ready for some well deserved me time! Remember, the only person you have to be honest with is yourself.

- You find yourself easily stressed out?
- You find yourself easily overwhelmed?
- You are unable find the joy in playing with your kids because they are annoying you (be truthful)
- You feel like you need to scream into a pillow
- You are stuck in a rut and don't know how to get out
- You want to start dreaming again
- You have trouble finding the positive
- You constantly feel frustrated
- Your fears, worries and anxieties are at an all time high
- You feel tired a lot

## **I NEED TO PUT MYSELF ON THE PRIORITY LIST**

If it is clear that self-care is essential and you are ready for ideas on how to implement these steps to fit into your already busy schedule, then this guide is for you.

Even I fell out of my routine and needed a kickstart back into a regular schedule. I have started and stopped these steps probably once or twice or tens of times, but always came back.

Once I found my rhythm, it worked like clockwork and now I can crank out all seven steps throughout the day with ease.

## **WHAT IS THIS GOING TO DO FOR ME??**

- Give you more patience
- Have clarity about things in your life
- Get to know yourself better
- Speak to yourself and others more kindly
- Breathe and relax when things get stressful
- Catch the creativity bug
- Get more done instead of going in circles
- Better focus

## **A FEW QUICK REMINDERS**

- You are not required to complete these in order. You can choose to do one or a couple at a time, but what is most important is you do what is right for you at this moment in your life.
- Be kind to yourself through this process. These steps give you permission to say YES to Yourself in order to become a better version of who you already are. You can't mess up while doing this so let go of any judgment you have towards yourself.
- If you feel overwhelmed at any point, take a step back and relax. This is all about how you take in a breath of fresh air when you are able to truly relax, even if it's for 30 seconds to write down what you are grateful for today.

If you're ready, I'm ready, so let's do this!

# STEP ONE

## Visualize Your Goals

Have you ever noticed how the mind tends to complicate things? It creates stories that would make for some really good daytime drama. We allow our brains to concoct worry, fear and anxiety in everyday situations, but what if we used our superpower for good.

The way the mind functions is when you begin thinking about something you desire, it goes to work to achieve that goal in every possible way as long as you stay focused on it.

This is where it can get a little tricky. You are capable of thinking both good things and bad things. Either way, the more you focus on them, the more your brain is going to get you what you asked for. Yes, you even asked for the bad stuff. This is why it is imperative to focus on the things you truly want to happen.

## **EVEN I WAS A SKEPTIC!**

Several years ago, someone mentioned doing vision boards to me and I was like "No way, Jose", that sounds cuckoo and way out there. Then, another friend mentioned she spends time visualizing what she wants with extreme detail.

What was going on here? A spiritual epidemic of sorts? Ok, I'm curious. I'll give it a try. For the life of me, I couldn't figure out how stay focused on these visions for an extended period of time. I assumed it was all hoax and stopped doing it all together.

On my journey to letting go of things that didn't serve me and working through past issues that were holding me back from greatness, I began hearing stories of how successful people were utilizing this method of visualization. Ok, I thought, I'll give it another try. It wasn't going to hurt anything and even though I was still a bit iffy on the whole thing, I caught the bug.

It allowed me to dream again and here's why:

It wasn't so much about the physicality of the vision board. Instead, it led me to take time to realize what I desired in my life. Where I wanted to travel, places I wanted to visit with my kids, what I wanted to accomplish in the next year and in the end, I got to know myself really well. I looked beyond my role as a wife and mother; to give the woman who had dreams and goals a chance to achieve them.

Then the day came I knew this was working! My kids watched me make a vision board and wanted one, too. I will never forget the day their vision of going to Disney World came true.

They had been dreaming about going to Disney World as long as I can remember. They would see the commercials on TV, watch shows on the Disney Channel and loved all the Disney Movies. It was only natural for them to want to visit this magical place in person.

Once they found pictures of "The Happiest Place on Earth" and put them on the board, all they had to do was keep those visions at the forefront of their minds. Seeing it on the board everyday made it possible not to forget. It was not too much longer after they created this board; we were able to give them the trip of a lifetime.

From seeing their wishes come true, to checking off my list one by one, I was hooked on vision boards. Visualization is personal, so there are many ways you can let yourself dream:

- Make a vision board background on your phone because it's something you see multiple times a day.
- Write down a list of 100 things you wanted to accomplish over your lifetime. Periodically, go back and see what you can mark off the list. It's like the biggest and best to do list ever.



- Complete a journal entry about your next month. What will you be doing, what have you accomplished, what is going on in your life. Read it every day to focus on those short term goals.

Doing these activities keep things front and centered in your mind allowing you to stay clear on achievable goals.

When looking back at your vision boards or journal entries to see what has actually taken place, you will see firsthand the extraordinary results. Way before I started this inner work, I would write stuff down here and there as a way to plan my future. Who doesn't do that?

### **THIS REALLY WORKED FOR ME!**

When I was 18 years old, I mapped out the plan for how old I was going to be when I got married and my age when the kids would be born. I thought about it on a regular basis and knew if I had my fourth and last baby by the time I was 32 then he would be the end cap to my child rearing years.

From there, I worked backwards and computed the rest. I ripped off the corner of a scratch piece of paper, wrote down the prediction and threw it in my nightstand to ultimately forget about it till a much later date.

My goals were to be married by age 24, have our first baby at 26, second baby at 28, third at 30 and fourth at 32. The kicker was finding a man who willing to do this life with me.

I met my future husband at 18 and had no clue if he was "the one". Turns out he was. He proposed to me at 23 and we got married 3 weeks before my 25th birthday, so I was still 24! CHECK!

We got pregnant with our first child shortly after our wedding and I was 26 when she was born. CHECK!

You can probably guess how the rest went. CHECK, CHECK and CHECK!

I literally saw the results of writing down what I desired and visualizing the outcome to manifest my thoughts over time. This wasn't an instant gratification thing. I had to be patient, but was willing to wait the 14 years it took from start to finish. Focusing on a dream and seeing it come to fruition was worth the wait.

**EXERCISE:** Allow yourself daydream about the future. The world is an abundant place, so dream big. If you are a visual person, then do a vision board or write in a journal. Let the ideas flow and whatever comes out, so be it. If you can see it all clearly in your head, let that be your focus every day until...

# STEP TWO

## A Gratitude Notebook

Each night after the kids are in bed, I sit and think about the day. Basically, I'm decompressing but it gives me a minute to let go of anything unpleasant and instead let the good shine through.

While in this state of calm, I go straight to the happiness and then write down three things I am grateful for in order to stay in an appreciative space.

The one thing consistently occurring is the gift of time. At least one of my entries includes spending time with my family or one on one time with the kids. Knowing my time with the children is limited; I choose to be grateful for each moment I have with them in order to receive more.

The universe recognizes when you are able to handle what you have in your life now, you will be open up to more good things in your life as you continue to be grateful for what you have. Show your gratitude for basic needs and everyday situations: for example, your bed, your warm house, running water, food on your table, driving your car, and even sibling rivalry.

Seriously???

Yes, hear me out. For instance, if your kids are bickering, be grateful they have each other. If your car runs out of gas, be grateful you have the means to call someone to help you out. If you are running late, be grateful someone is waiting for you.

### **PASSING THE TORCH!**

Showing your gratitude every day is magnifying the positive emotions you have and maintaining those feel good sensations. By having this strong energy, I feel compelled to share this step with my children.

When I get to writing down my three gratitudes for the day, I am already in a thankful mood because our nightly routine has a one on one time with each of the kids. We go over their rules for bedtime and do a little prayer for the people in our lives. I then ask them three questions so they genuinely think back over their day:

- "What was your favorite part of the day?"
- "What are you grateful for?"
- "What did you do good today?"

They focus on their daily accomplishments and they tell me about whom and what they are grateful for. I remind my kids, when we focus on the good, then more good will come to us.

Happiness comes when we are thankful for what we have now instead of

always looking towards the future. Sure, we talk about visualizing what you want your goals to be, but that doesn't diminish the fact that you can be happy where you are now.

### **HOW DO I KEEP TRACK?**

I write in my gratitude journal every night before bed. Everyone digests information differently, so maybe the morning is better for you, after waking up and feeling refreshed. Do what works into your schedule!

Either way, keep your journal on your nightstand waiting for you. Make this the time to be reflective about your day, spending a minute or so reviewing what happened. Pleasant memories that occurred may pop up, ones you forgot about until you were able to be still and otherwise lost until they were written down.

### **THIS IS FOR YOU TO CELEBRATE THE NOW!**

Don't stress if you skip a night or two. The thing about gratitude is you can feel it whenever you like. It's not necessary to have a gratitude journal but it makes the experience come alive.

I use a journal to consciously think about my day forging a lasting memory of all those good things.

### **HOW MUCH TIME DO I HAVE TO COMMIT?**

As far as a time commitment goes, it takes me less than a minute to do this, but the benefits of doing this small action every day are huge. My journal is

opened once I get the kids in bed (for the first time). Meaning, odds are at least 1 out of 4 children will get up from their bed before they are completely settled for the night.

I hang out in my room in waiting mode for that person(s) to come tell me something before I retreat downstairs to relax with my husband for the rest of the evening. While sitting there, it is the best time to whip out my journal and take a breather before a child comes out saying they are parched. Since the kids and I have settled down together, it allows my response towards them to be calmer when they inevitably come out of their rooms.

Gratitude is such a habit for me that it has become a coping mechanism for stress. I am able to tap into it throughout the day whenever I need it. When something frustrating pops up, I use gratitude as a reminder to say, for example, "I am grateful that I have children to ask me 13489374501 questions in a row." Instead of coming from a place of extreme annoyance, I can pause and look at the positive side of the sheer volume of things coming out of their mouths.

**HONESTY TIME:** Sometimes, it can take a minute (or five) for me to find that gratitude but once there, I instantly feel the shift to becoming calmer in any given situation.

**EXERCISE:** Grab a journal and use it solely for writing down what you are grateful for each day. Pick a time that works best for you and write three gratitudes. All mine start like this: *I am grateful for...*

# STEP THREE

## Take 3 Deep Breaths

Even though the seven individual steps are different, the outcomes are very similar. You are going to feel more relaxed, less stressed, happier and have a positive outlook on life.

As an only child, there weren't other people that frustrated me at home. I had my mom's undivided attention and got my alone time when I needed it. For a long time, it was my mom and I, which was awesome, but when I became a mother of four, it was time to figure out how to divide myself between kids. There are some *lost in translation* moments because every day is a learning experience and sometimes I have no idea how to handle a situation.

When I was young (and dumb), I thought having four kids was going to be a piece of cake. Weren't they going to be each other's best friends all the time?

What was I thinking?

I truly wasn't prepared for all the bickering and whining and fighting and hitting and yelling and biting and the list goes on and on. I mean, I wasn't that dumb, of course. I knew it was going to happen but had no idea about the extent of it all. I had seen my friends act this way around their own siblings but never thought about their mother during these arguments. What was she going to have to endure to maintain a level of superhero patience?

Maybe she didn't! Maybe she did explode. I have. My expectations were way out of whack since I didn't grow up with siblings.

### **IT WAS TIME FOR A CHANGE!**

It all started when I Googled how to stop yelling and screaming at my kids. The solution to my problem: anger management classes. It is like when you search WebMD and the answer to your illness is always something major like cancer. I didn't think I had a huge problem, but it was time to learn how to control my emotions before they got worse. It was an extreme solution to an easy to fix problem.

When envisioning my discipline style as a young mother it never occurred to me that I would be like the cartoon mom with fire blowing out of her head.

Alas, that was me for a long time. I didn't know how to deal with this type of behavior from my children, so I basically was reacting with my own tantrum to try and handle the situation. I didn't know what to do so I got louder and fought back in many of the same ways they did. There was no



responding in a civilized manner; instead I was acting like a child.

## **HOW DO I STOP?**

Once I started becoming mindful about how my temper could get out of control, I was finally aware there was a problem. I figured if I screamed louder, they would listen to me. Well, it only works on some of my kids. The other ones get frightened and scared by mommy's loudness.

**TRUTH TIME:** I was a spanker. Ok, it's out there, but my gut feeling was always telling me to stop. I was being the big bully on the playground, using my strength and authority to pick on the little guy.

Spanking wasn't who I am fundamentally. Deep down, my frustration came from a lack of knowledge of how to deal with my anger issues. The moment of no return was the day my daughter called me on it. In our house, spanking was a last resort so it didn't happen often but if she saw it as a problem then it was time to change.

Before my youngest was old enough to get into trouble, I changed my tone, demeanor and attitude when frustration would arise. Yes, I still yell once in awhile when I'm extra tired or they push the right buttons to get me all riled up. When I do yell, I am able to feel the anger in my body. It creates an uncomfortable feeling in my stomach and immediately I know the situation needs to be handled differently.

## HOW DO I CONTROL MY EMOTIONS?

The first step when life gets so overwhelming that you feel like Mt. Vesuvius and are going to explode is to walk away. It's similar to the shaken baby syndrome video you have to watch in the hospital before you take your baby home.

Babies are going to cry and scream and sometimes it's going to get under your skin, so the best thing for both of you is to walk away. If you need to scream, hit something and let out your frustration, do it on a pillow, instead of your child.

Same thing goes for when they are older. Instead they follow you. Continue to walk away quietly and quickly. Barricade yourself in a room if you have to but step away from the situation and allow yourself to pause.

Once you are alone and can tune out the noise, take three huge, deep belly breaths to calm yourself down. What this does is releases the pit in your stomach feeling and stops you from making a rash decision in the heat of the moment. *Side note:* also works with spousal disputes.

If you can't get away, pause for a moment, and take a breath before you respond to the situation. When I am able to stop and assess what is going on with a calmer disposition, I can talk my kid down off the ledge. I am able to give them options to make better choices because I, myself, am making a better choice by not letting my emotions get the best of me.

## HOW DOES THIS BREATHING TECHNIQUE HELP IN THE MOMENT?

- It gives you patience to sit and offer a child the same two options over and over again until they choose a better response.
- You are able to have a calm conversation between two people, listening and responding back and forth in a civilized manner.
- Once relaxed, you can pick up a screaming child and carry them upstairs to their room to allow them to stop on their own terms without disturbing others.
- An ability to dish out punishments in a reasonable manner instead of taking away everything they own, which in turn is an empty threat, because we all know that isn't going to happen.

Deep breathing is being able to release the anger held inside and gives me a chance to stop and focus on what is really important. And that is being the adult in the situation by not giving into your own tantrum. I can apologize sincerely when I do have my own meltdown because it is not something that happens often.

**EXERCISE:** Start in a calm state, go off somewhere by yourself and feel what it is like to take three deep belly breaths. Be aware of what your body is doing and how you feel inside. Then when you are triggered, you will know how your body feels when it is capable of making good, calm decisions.

# STEP FOUR

## Journal Your Thoughts

Have you ever noticed how many thoughts come into your head when you are about to fall asleep, keeping you awake for much longer than anticipated?

Many of these thoughts are being bottled up in your head all day long. Instead of letting them out, many moms end up talking about Dora or Minecraft for a majority of their day but never get to release their own thoughts. The trouble with keeping everything inside is it builds up and eventually finds a way out and not always in the scenario. To combat this, I allow myself to vent in my journal making me better equipped to handle other stressful situations.

On the flip side, when the day gets away from me and I don't have the opportunity to write down all that's inside, I tend to blow up at my children for something I know I could have handle much better.

**Situation 1:** I diligently sit for 5-10 minutes releasing everything that is going on in my head. I sit and let the pen do the work. This method of writing is most cathartic from pen to paper but also works at the keyboard. When I sit to write, it's almost as if someone else is doing the writing for me

because the thoughts come out so quickly. Let's fast forward to the evening when one or more of my children is giving me grief about going to bed. Since I make time to release thoughts, I can calmly rectify the situation by reasoning with said child.

**Situation 2:** The day was busy and I didn't make time to sit and journal. Things were coming up and I forgot. When bedtime rolled around and no one was listening to me, crazy Hulk Mommy came out and she didn't handle the situation well at all. Everyone (including herself) was crying. After she got the kids in bed, she felt anxious and overwhelmed which carried on through to her own bedtime, she snaps at her husband, rolls over and cries (again), and then can't fall asleep because there are so many thoughts rummaging around in her head.

Would you rather live out Situation 1 or Situation 2? The answer is clear because all it takes is a sliver of your day to release all that pent up energy swirling around as thoughts in your head. It can make the world of difference on how you control your emotions. The choice is yours to make.

**EXERCISE:** Grab another notebook or journal, nothing fancy, but dedicate this one to journaling. Use those deep breaths we talked about in Step 3 to get calm and then let the pen do all the work. Spend as little or as much time as you need to feel that release. It could be a couple sentences or 20 pages. It's up to you.

# STEP FIVE

## Find 5 Minutes of Quiet Time

**Picture this:** A Buddhist monk sitting high upon the mountains of Tibet, cloaked in robes, sitting crosslegged, eyes closed softly, face is relaxed, hands resting on his knees turned upwards with his thumb and pointer fingertips touching, letting the cool air breeze by and in a state of complete and utter conscious awareness to the present. An hour has gone by and he still sits peacefully and quietly listening to the wind blow by.

**Now picture this:** A sneaky mom sitting in her closet with the doors close, ear buds in, listening to her meditation app, legs stretched, hand clasped on lap, breathing, but wondering if someone will find her, and constantly reminding her to let her thoughts go while she is taking this time for herself. At one point, she has to tell a child to find something to do for a couple minutes and then mommy will be right there. She attempts to be present and not let her thoughts of what is going on downstairs haunt her. She has to remind herself to let go of worry for what is coming up the rest of the day and stop trying to plan dinner.

Both situations work great for that individual person. There is no perfect

meditation environment. I began meditating as a form of release from everything that was going on in my life. To have a break from the mom worry and learn how to let go of anxieties that popped up. Meditation is a constant reminder to be present in both my practice and everyday life.

Meditation has taught me how to have awareness of my breath and then taking those skills off the mat (or closet floor) to use them in moments of stress. If meditation isn't your thing, that's ok, too. What anyone can use this time for is a break from the busyness of life. A time to let go, be still, breathe and be present with what is going on right now. Speak to your higher power, whoever that is for you and just be.

It's not necessarily what you practice but instead giving your mind a chance to pause. Many of us are constantly go, go, go; thinking and prepping for what is next. Whenever it is for you, it is the time to reduce stress levels and let go of any anxiety.

### **I DON'T PEE ALONE, HOW AM I GOING TO DO THIS?**

All you need is 5-10 minutes to schedule into your day. It could look like any one of these scenarios.

- When your children are taking a nap, have a seat.
- Getting up several minutes before the rest of the house when it's quiet and you are still in that peaceful frame of mind.
- After you have fed the children lunch and settled them into their rest time (no one naps at my house anymore.)

At our house, the afternoon is Mommy's time to work. Oddly, they like to have some time alone after school, too. I take full advantage of this introverted side of my kids to head into my closet for those ten wonderful minutes where I allow myself to not think about anything but breathing.

### **HOW DO I STOP MY MIND FROM RACING?**

Go in with the full intention of having a clear mind. Thoughts will arise. Allow the thought to come and then pass as quickly as it came. Welcome the thought but don't entertain it to let the story run wild. Bring yourself back to the breath and really be mindful of getting that me time in throughout the day you truly need to function properly.

Meditation channels my creative side because I've let thoughts pass by and cleared my mind, so it opens me up to things that I want to do. After a meditation is the perfect time, if you have it, to pull out that journal and let the ink flow.

**EXERCISE:** Find a quiet place in your house where you can be undisturbed for 5-10 minutes. Per my suggestion, download the [Calm App](#) or other meditation app to help you get started if meditation is your choice. If you choose to sit in quiet or pray, awesome! The only thing I ask of you is be kind to yourself and sit still.



# STEP SIX

## Speak Positively To Yourself

Good self talk can go a long way! Daily affirmations allow me to speak wisdom into myself, from myself. It's like my own little pep talk to get the day started. You got this. You are awesome. I can do it. I believe in you.

The truth is you might not get compliments every day from others, but what you can do is speak to your own self-worth. You are able to control what you think about yourself. You can choose to believe what others say OR make the decision to know who you really are deep down.

Affirmations are an internal dialogue you speak to yourself. They allow you to create life experiences by how you speak to yourself. You will say things to yourself that you would never in a million years say to anyone else. Affirmations give the power to raise your vibration higher to program your mind for greatness.

For these thoughts to ring true, you have to believe they are already happening to you right now. For example, maybe you aren't living in your ideal body, but affirmations will cause you to drive positive change. In this way, you treat yourself with the highest regard knowing that whatever you set your mind to, you can achieve.

Saying these affirmations daily (or more than once a day) is something easy to do. When you continue saying them over and over, they become another habit in your wheelhouse of change.

Each morning, on my way to the gym, I repeat the following affirmations to get clarity on goals, both short and long term. The intensity builds and the confidence rises. As this happens, I get louder and louder and louder until I'm shouting in my car, screaming to myself words of encouragement that I use to get myself through the day:

**START BY SAYING: I AM....**

I am abundant in all areas of my life!

Large sums of money come to me in expected and unexpected ways!

I am a money magnet!

I am enough!

I am strong!

I am a writer that inspires others to say YES to themselves!

I easily contribute a net six figure income to my family each year!

I got this!

I can do it!

I am confident!

**EXERCISE:** Come up with three affirmations you can commit to memory. The first three I ever used are on the list above. Say them over and over till they become engrained in your brain. Then start saying them to yourself in the morning, in the shower and other times throughout the day when you need a pick me up.

# STEP SEVEN

## Move Your Body

Most days of the week, I'm awake before the crack of dawn (and my kids) to get a jump start on the day. It wasn't till a couple years ago that I became a morning person. I have read back on old posts I've written and laughed as I say things like,

- "Why are the kids up before 8am?"
- "How am I going to make it through the day?"
- "How am I supposed to even function let alone be up at this time of day?"

Sleeping in is about 6:30am, because my body has been conditioned to wake up before the sun at 5:20am. The reason being is so I get my workout done before my head can figure out what my body is doing to it. The endorphins released give me clarity and energy I need to stay alert all day. On my rest days, the mornings get started much slower both mentally and physically. My pajamas stay on longer and my thumbs are in scrolling mode on social media. This is balance to my regular days but I thrive when I get up and go.

Over the years, exercise has been scheduled at different times throughout the day, but before early morning workouts have been key to keeping a consistent commitment. When younger and kid free, my exercise schedule was whenever I wanted but without a set plan, the workouts would go by the wayside. If something better came along then I would pass on the exercise to go have fun.

It wasn't a priority.

Upon becoming a mother, I wanted to get in shape for not only myself but to be a good role model for my children. On the days I did work out, which with little babies weren't consistent, my patience was so much higher.

When my youngest was a baby, I trained for my first half marathon, so my runs were scheduled out weeks in advance. If I didn't get out and run, I would fall behind on my training being unprepared for the race. I would nurse him for his last feeding of the night around 6:30/7pm and then head out for my run. Once I began working out 5-6 times a week for an extended period of time, it became a habit so engrained in my body and brain that it was part of who I was.

At my CrossFit Box, there's an app where we sign up for class, so we can schedule in our workouts weeks in advanced. By doing this, I make myself a priority and I would not want to cancel an important appointment, especially with myself.

Yes, 5:20am is early but again that's what works for me. This is all about giving you a baseline and having you figure out what works best for you and your family. That is the only time in our busy day I can fit it in, but maybe for you, it's in the afternoon or after you drop the kids off at school.

## **MAKE THE COMMITMENT**

No matter when you can work out, put it in your calendar. Just like you schedule in your kids' activities, doctor's appointments, work meetings, etc, you need to schedule in your exercise as a commitment to yourself.

Set yourself up for success. The night before set out all your clothes and items you will need the next day. If you use pre workout drinks, electrolytes, water and/or a recovery drink then get out the ingredients prior to so you aren't fumbling around in the morning. If you are trying to wake up earlier to have your workout done and kick start your metabolism for the day, then gradually set your alarm earlier and earlier until you reach the desired wake up time.

## **WHAT SHOULD I DO TO EXERCISE?**

Where should I work out? That is all up to you. Find something you like and go for it. Whatever you decided to try, give it several months so you are able to get used to the new activity. It could be:

- Running
- Kickboxing
- CrossFit
- Swimming
- Barre

- Spin classes
- Yoga
- Lifting weights at the gym
- Walking
- Working out to tapes in your basement

### **NEWBIE TIP:**

Give yourself time to stretch before and after the workout. This is as important as the sweaty part. If you don't stretch out your muscles you are more prone to injury. As someone who had to take a year off from running due to plantar fasciitis, I have learned prevention is key and make stretching a daily part of my routine.

If anything I'm showing my kids I appreciate my body and want to treat it right. They also reap the benefits of a happy go lucky mom who has a healthy body image in a world that places emphasis on only looking good on the outside.

On the days I wake up, go to the gym and get my workout in, I come home and am on fire. I'm able to get a whole day's worth of chores in, shower, get kids ready for school, make lunches and everything done in the hour and forty five minutes before dropping them off. My nutrition is on point those mornings and I start my day off in a way that I'm proud of myself for the rest of the day.

**EXERCISE:** If you have a workout routine you follow, challenge yourself by

trying something new or pushing to the next level. If you do not have anything in place, take the time to figure out what you would like to do. It could start as a walk around your neighborhood with the baby in the stroller. Find what you like and then make the commitment to start.



# **BONUS**

## **Exercise Your Brain**

When I was in the throes of having lots of tiny children and continuing to add more to our brood, I loved reading and sharing new books with them. It was all about the kids but somehow I forgot to sit down and read a book myself.

My mindset was that I didn't have enough time to read anything other than board books. When my mom would take a kid or two for the night, I would binge read books because I had hours to myself. I believed that was the only way to do it. Remember when the Harry Potter books were first released? My husband and I would get the newest book of the series and read for one or two days in a row to finish the book by pulling some very late nights. We didn't have kids then, so we were able to sleep in the next morning and not worry about being woken up in the middle of the night, regretting the fact that we chose to read instead of sleep.

I love reading, but had no time when I was running my first business during nap time and after the kids went to bed. My so called free time was gone.

Enter the breakdown!

This is when the realization of scheduled me time began but I didn't know

where to start. There was one evening when my husband got home from work and as he walked into the door, I had my keys and purse in hand and left. I had to get out of there and be alone with myself. I didn't know where I was going to go or what I was going to do but I knew that if I didn't leave right then, I would snap. Turns out all it took was a drive around the block down to the ice cream store. With gourmet sorbet in hand, I sat in the parking lot, took a breather, ate my ice cream and cried over the mental stress I was having.

When I got home, I told my husband that it was necessary for him to take the kids off my hands for at least 1 hour each week. That's all I wanted. I wanted to leave or have them leave so I could have the house to myself. The next week, they left for a couple hours and when they got back I felt refreshed. From there, I made a point to figure out how to make this happen when the kids were home, so I didn't breakdown again.

As I got into self-care, I began my journey back to reading with podcasts because it was an easy way for me to learn and still be available for the kids. As the seven step process came to me organically, I knew I could find ten minutes a day to read a little bit here and there.

I needed to stop being a hypocrite to my children by telling them it was important to read when I wasn't even doing it myself. A whole year would go by without me reading anything but a magazine from the doctor's office waiting room.

As someone who once believed that learning stopped after college, the

light switch flipped on and the first thing I wanted to learn more about was me. Craving knowledge, I found myself checking out multiple books from of the library and having a full Amazon cart waiting for me to purchase items.

### **I WANTED MORE:**

- New ideas from successful people
- Better focus and clarity
- A better role model for my children
- Become an advocate for myself to continue learning outside of school

Obviously, the learning doesn't stop when you get that diploma in your hand. I actually think I have learned more in the years I've been out of school than when I was in school. I'm able to read books that truly interest me instead of ones I had to read for class.

I give myself permission to read for as little or as long as I want without feeling guilty. I read because it is good, free entertainment. I read an eclectic array of books and my vocabulary has shot through the roof. Because of reading, I have gotten insight into my own writing style and how I want to share information with my readers. Reading opened up more topics to write about because something comes up in a story and I want to contribute my own ideas.

This past summer I read 30 books, declaring it the summer of books. Seriously! It was my time to really dig deep into something I loved during the down time of summer. I read while we were at the pool, resting after the pool or when the kids were playing with each other. Instead of turning on

the tv, I opened a book. I read into the late hours of the night again and would plan the next day as a rest day from working out.

What I love about reading is the ability to get lost in a story or step into someone else's world to see how they tick and how you can relate to their life. Like my other seven steps, it's about getting to spend time with myself doing the things I love.

**EXERCISE:** Go to your local library to reserve a book that you want to read or head over to Amazon and order a new book sent to your house via PrimeNow. You don't have to have a deadline to finish but read 5 pages once you get the book and if you feel compelled, keep going!

# CONCLUSION

Synergy between all these steps is key and yes, you will see some overlapping outcomes from doing these because they tend to all work together. The main thing to remember is to go at your own pace. There is no correct order to these 7 steps because it is what works best for you in this moment of your life.

I didn't start out with all seven steps. I didn't know what they all were and as you can tell from my examples, I didn't even like some of them at the beginning. The moment I gave it a chance, I found they brought me the peace and calm I needed in my crazy, busy life. Be open to trying something that will give you time to grow and be able to decompress from your day is something we as moms need.

Motherhood is all about taking things day by day, so treat this guide in the same manner. When you begin, start with one and as you get into the groove continue to keep adding more and more till you can easily do all 7 in a day.

You might even have a great idea that works for you to get some alone time and I would love to hear about it because I'm open to learning more ways to get that me time.

Good luck to you! This is not the end for us. I would love to hear how it is going.

Thank you again for saying YES to Yourself!

*-Abbey*



**Email:** [Abbey@AbbeyFatica.com](mailto:Abbey@AbbeyFatica.com)

**Website:** <http://AbbeyFatica.com>

**Facebook:** [Abbey Fatica](#)

**Instagram:** [@AbbeyFatica](#)

# **APPENDIX**

## **7 STEPS PLUS BONUS MATERIAL**

**STEP 1: Visualize Your Goals**

**STEP 2: Write In A Gratitude Notebook**

**STEP 3: Take 3 Deep Breaths**

**STEP 4: Journal Your Thoughts**

**STEP 5: Find 5 Minutes of Quiet Time**

**STEP 6: Speak Positively To Yourself**

**STEP 7: Move Your Body**

**BONUS: Exercise Your Brain**