

7 DAYS TO EMBRACE

Your Body and Mind

BY APRIL MARIA



A step-by-step workbook with prompts
and exercises for daily self-reflection and
self-care

HEY THERE!

This Self-Love Workbook is your guide to reconnecting with your body, mind, and emotions in just seven days. Through affirmations, guided exercises, and journaling prompts, you'll create daily rituals that foster confidence, self-compassion, and inner peace. Each day builds on the last, helping you release negative patterns and replace them with empowering habits for lasting self-love.

APRIL MARIA

ABOUT ME



Hi, I'm April, a Psychosexual and Relationship Therapist in training, a Certified Sex Educator, and an Embodied Intimacy Coach with a background in sexual health and wellness. I specialise in helping individuals and couples reconnect with their bodies and emotions, blending creativity with practical exercises and psychosexual education. My passion is guiding people to discover self-love and confidence, empowering them to embrace their authentic selves fully.

April Maria



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SELF-CARE CHECKLIST

Self-care is more than just a trend; it is essential for nurturing your mind, body, and soul. In our busy lives, we often put the needs of others first, neglecting the most important relationship we have—the one with ourselves. Engaging in daily self-care practice is a way to show up for yourself, honour your needs, and foster a deeper connection to your body and mind.

I encourage you to tick at least SEVEN off over the next week!

☐	No technology day	☐	Watch the sunrise
☐	Read for pleasure	☐	Listen to your favorite music
☐	Go for a long walk	☐	Spend time with a loved one
☐	Practice mindful meditation	☐	Watch a light-hearted movie
☐	Journal your thoughts	☐	Pamper yourself
☐	Try gentle yoga	☐	Take a short nap
☐	Cook a nourishing meal	☐	Go for a swim
☐	Take yourself for lunch	☐	Practice gratitude
☐	Treat yourself to a new book	☐	Attend a workshop or class
☐	Paint or draw	☐	Explore a new place



SETTING THE FOUNDATION FOR GROWTH

As you embark on this seven-day journey, it's essential to set intentions that guide and ground you throughout the week. Intentions are like the compass that steers you in the direction of your goals and desires. They provide clarity, purpose, and focus, allowing you to stay aligned with your aspirations for self-care and growth.

Why Set Intentions?

Setting clear intentions is not just about outlining what you want to achieve; it's about consciously choosing to show up for yourself. When you set intentions, you create a mindset of purpose. Intentions are rooted in mindfulness—they bring your awareness to the present moment and help you stay grounded, even when life's distractions arise.

Goals give us direction, but intentions offer the energy and mindset needed to stay on course. They serve as reminders to be kind to ourselves, acknowledging that growth is a journey, not a destination. Holding yourself accountable to your intentions nurtures self-trust, an essential element of self-love. By committing to your intentions, you create a sense of empowerment and self-respect, cultivating a deeper connection with who you are and who you want to become.

How to Set Your Intentions:

- Be clear and specific
- Stay positive yet mindful
- Create realistic goals that can be achieved
- Reflect and adjust when needed
- Remember this is about you, no one else!

Remember, your intentions aren't about perfection—they are about progress.



WRITE DOWN YOUR INTENTIONS FOR THE WEEK BELOW:

INTENTION #1

Example: I am embarking on this seven-day journey because I want to...

INTENTION #2

Example: I will acknowledge my strengths and celebrate each small victory along the way. I will do this by...

INTENTION #3

Example: At the end of these seven days, I hope to achieve...

NOW, LET'S GET STARTED!





DAY 1:

Grounding in the Present

"I am here, I am whole, and I am enough just as I am."

DAY 1: Grounding in the Present

"I am here, I am whole, and I am enough just as I am."

INTENTION FOR THE DAY:

Today, we will focus on grounding yourself in the present moment. Being present allows us to quiet the noise and appreciate who we are right now.

WHY IS THIS IMPORTANT?

Grounding brings you into the present moment, helping you release anxiety and regain focus. It allows you to approach the rest of the week with clarity and calm. By being fully present, you're reminded that you are enough just as you are, laying a strong foundation for your self-love journey.

GUIDED EXERCISE:

Find a quiet space where you can sit comfortably or lie down without distractions. Close your eyes and take a few deep breaths, gently letting go of any external tension. Begin by focusing on your breath—inhale deeply, silently saying to yourself, "I receive," and as you exhale, softly say, "I release." Let each breath ground you further into the present moment. This isn't about having a clear head but more about being aware of your thoughts and your body.

As you continue this pattern, start tuning into your body. Notice any areas that feel tense, tight, or uneasy. Without judgment, gently direct your attention to these areas. Imagine a colour that represents how you feel in this space. Is it a cool blue, a warm red, or perhaps a soft green? Now, choose a descriptive word that captures the feeling—maybe "heavy," "light," "warm," or "tangled."

Give these sensations the care and attention they need. As you breathe, visualise your breath flowing into these areas, bringing soothing relief and warmth. With each inhale, imagine infusing these areas with comfort, and with each exhale, visualize releasing any discomfort or negativity.

Spend at least five minutes focusing on your breath and this awareness practice, allowing yourself the space to let go of tension, stress, or any distractions. If you feel tense or stressed moving forward, remember that this breathing exercise is a powerful tool to help you return to the present moment, offering peace, grounding, and connection.

DAY 1: Grounding in the Present

THE SCIENCE BEHIND BREATHING TECHNIQUES

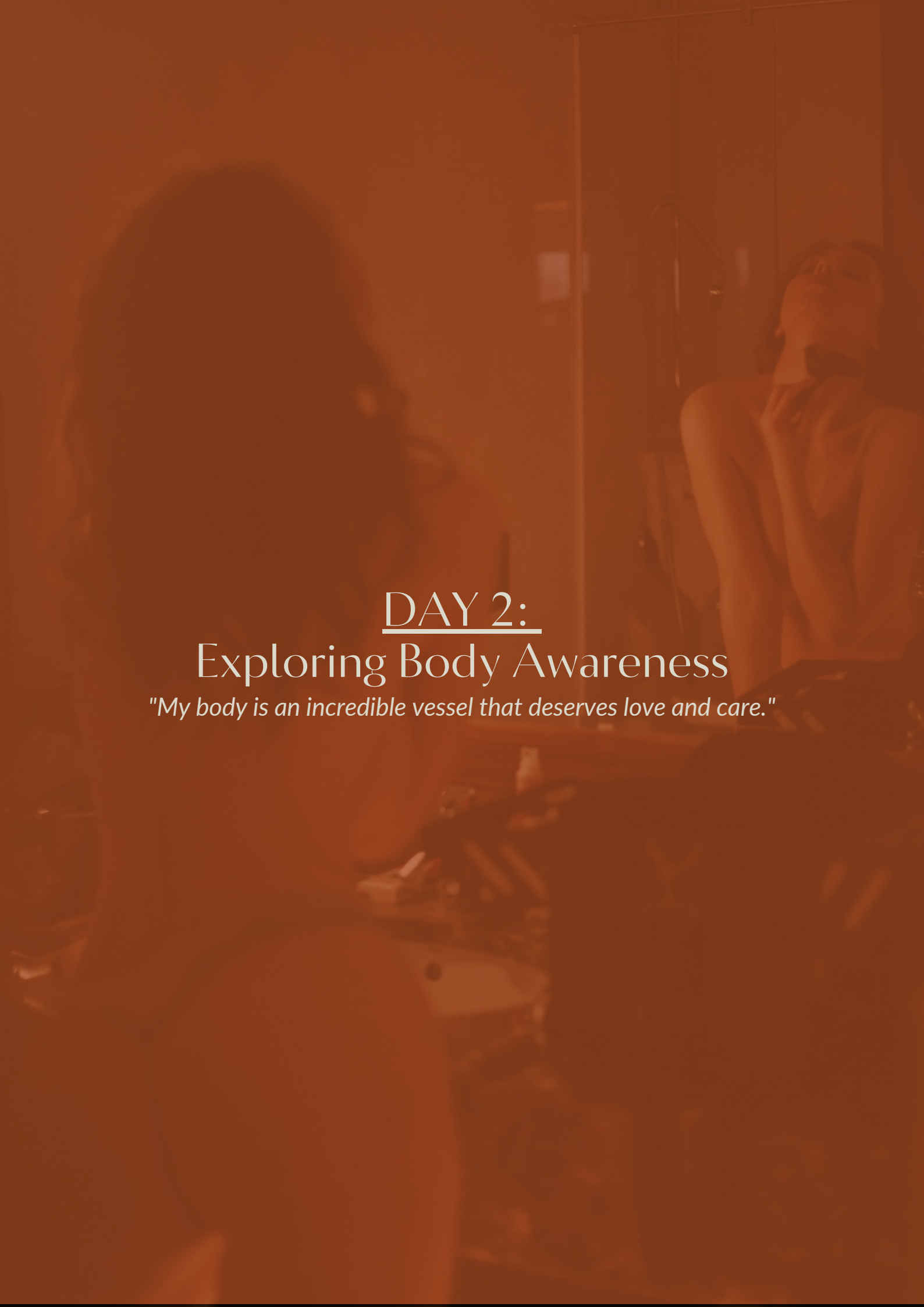
Breathing techniques work by activating the body's parasympathetic nervous system, which is responsible for promoting relaxation and reducing stress. When we focus on slow, deep breaths, it signals to the brain that it's time to calm down, lowering heart rate and blood pressure. This process helps shift our state of mind from fight, flight or freeze mode to a more grounded and present state, allowing us to feel more connected to ourselves and the moment. As a result, intentional breathing can foster a sense of calm, clarity, and emotional balance.

If you struggle to do the exercise alone, download a guided meditation audio to support your breathing.

After doing this exercise...

What did you notice or feel about your body and how it responds to these acts of love and attention?

What specific steps will I take to ensure that I consistently prioritize my non-negotiable acts of self-care each day, even when life feels overwhelming or busy?

A woman is shown from the chest up, standing in a shower. She has her head tilted back and eyes closed, with her hands near her face. The entire image is covered with a semi-transparent orange filter. The background shows the interior of a shower stall with glass panels and a showerhead.

DAY 2: Exploring Body Awareness

"My body is an incredible vessel that deserves love and care."

DAY 2: Exploring Body Awareness

"My body is an incredible vessel that deserves love and care."

INTENTION FOR THE DAY:

Today's focus is on deepening your awareness of your body. Your body supports you every day, and it deserves your gratitude. Taking time to acknowledge your body and deepen your awareness is an act of respect and love. It's easy to become disconnected from our physical selves, especially in a world that often emphasises appearance over well-being and productivity over rest and nourishment.

WHY IS THIS IMPORTANT?

Our bodies are often overlooked, yet they are the vessels that carry us through life. Exploring body awareness helps you build a loving relationship with yourself by recognising the beauty and strength of your body. By focusing on body awareness, you reconnect with the very essence of who you are—something far more profound than external appearance or superficial traits.

GUIDED EXERCISE:

This mirror exercise is designed to help you reconnect with your body and acknowledge its beauty and strength. The goal is to see your body with compassion and appreciation. Here's a step-by-step guide to guide you through the process:

1. *Stand or sit comfortably in front of a mirror where you can see your full body.*
2. *Take a few deep breaths until you feel grounded, whether standing or sitting.*
3. *Gently observe your reflection.*
4. *Start at your head and slowly scan your body down to your toes, noticing each part without judgment. Acknowledge what you see with kindness.*
5. *As you reach your chest or stomach, place your hand there. Feel the warmth and connection.*
6. *Say aloud (or silently), "Thank you," appreciating your body for its strength and resilience.*
7. *If negative thoughts arise, pause and acknowledge them. Gently redirect your focus back to gratitude, saying something like, "I hear you, but I choose to focus on love today."*
8. *Take a few moments to notice how you feel after the scan.*
9. *When ready, take a deep breath and step away, carrying this sense of appreciation with you.*

DAY 2: Exploring Body Awareness

Write a letter to your body, acknowledging its strengths and the ways it supports you daily.

Reflection: What feelings came up during the mirror exercise? How can I offer my body more kindness?

A person is lying down, wearing a white medical brace on their back. The brace has straps and buckles. The background is a warm, orange-toned image of the person's back and the brace.

DAY 3: Cultivating Compassion

"I am gentle with myself. I deserve patience and care."

DAY 3: Cultivating Compassion

INTENTION FOR THE DAY:

Today, we will focus on cultivating self-compassion. We often extend kindness to others but forget to offer it to ourselves. The truth is, self-compassion isn't just about being kind to yourself when things are going well; it's about showing up for yourself with kindness, understanding, and care—especially during challenging times. It's about recognising that, like everyone else, you are human, and you deserve the same gentle treatment you would give to those you love.

WHY IS THIS IMPORTANT?

This allows us to move through life with greater resilience, confidence, and peace. It's about creating space for mistakes, learning from them, and embracing the process of becoming, rather than expecting perfection. Practicing self-compassion also strengthens our emotional well-being, allowing us to handle stress and difficulties with a calmer, more balanced mindset.

GUIDED EXERCISE:

Bring to mind something that has been challenging for you recently—whether it's a mistake you've made, something you're struggling with, or an emotion you're experiencing. Don't try to push it away or ignore it. Allow it to be present with you.

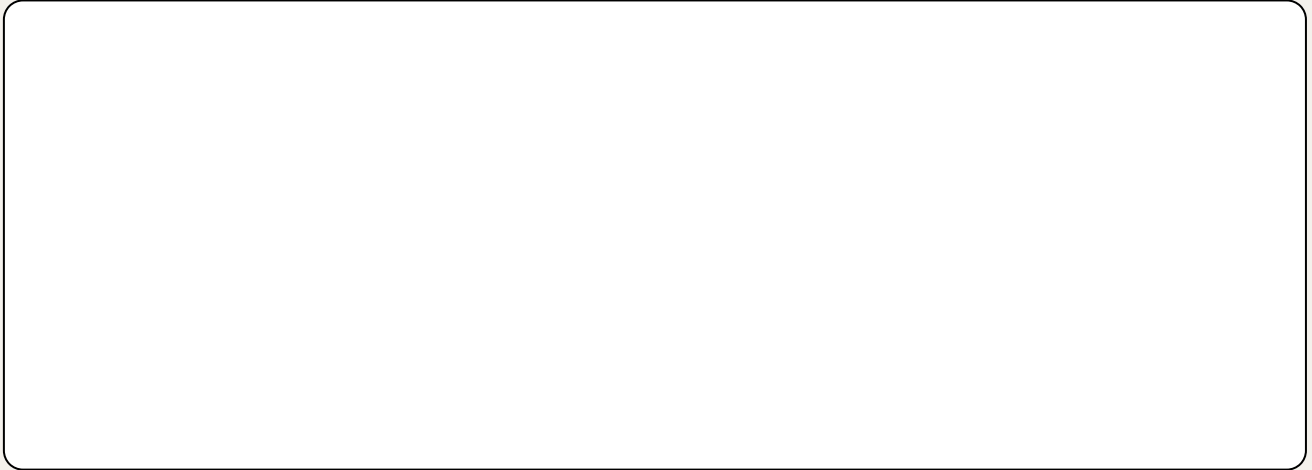
Without judgment, notice how you feel about this challenge or struggle. Are you feeling frustrated, guilty, sad, or maybe ashamed? Whatever emotions arise, simply acknowledge them and write it down on a piece of paper along with the emotions that come up. Say to yourself, "It's okay to feel this way." Recognise that all emotions are valid and part of the human experience.

On the other side of the paper, write down the advice or support you would give to a friend if they presented this to you. What comforting, understanding words would you offer? Allow yourself to hear these words, but now, say them to yourself.

To close the exercise, take a few more deep breaths and silently express gratitude to yourself. Thank yourself for taking the time to be kind to your body, mind, and soul.

DAY 3: Cultivating Compassion

Take a moment to reflect on how it felt to offer yourself compassion



Reflection: How does offering myself compassion change the way I feel about my challenges?



DAILY PRACTICES TO REINFORCE SELF-COMPASSION

Morning Affirmations:

Write down or repeat an affirmation focused on self-compassion, such as:

"I am worthy of love and care, no matter what happens today," or
"I embrace my imperfections and treat myself with kindness."

This can exist on a post-it note placed on your bathroom mirror to look at while you brush your teeth.

Throughout the day, if negative or critical thoughts arise, stop and consciously replace them with kind words. Try saying to yourself, "I am learning. I am growing. I am worthy of love, even in my struggles."

DAY 4:
Embracing Strengths
"I celebrate my unique strengths and abilities."

DAY 4: Embracing Strengths

INTENTION FOR THE DAY:

Too often, we focus on areas we feel need improvement or things we wish we could change about ourselves. While growth and self-awareness are important, it's equally essential to recognise and honour the qualities that make you who you are. Celebrating your strengths isn't about arrogance; it's about acknowledging the value and power that already reside within you. Your unique attributes, whether they are talents, qualities, or the ways you navigate life, are worthy of recognition and appreciation.

WHY IS THIS IMPORTANT?

By taking time today to celebrate your strengths, you are practising self-empowerment. It's about showing yourself appreciation, not only for your accomplishments but for the inherent qualities that make you uniquely YOU. This act of celebration can serve as a reminder that you are always deserving of love, praise, and respect, both from others and, most importantly, from yourself.

GUIDED EXERCISE:

List three qualities you admire about yourself. How do these strengths show up in your daily life?

DAY 4: Embracing Strengths

What do others often compliment me on?
(Don't be afraid to ask someone close to you.)

What do I feel proud of in my life?

What are three things I do naturally that bring value to others, and how can I appreciate these as strengths?

Reflection: What did acknowledging my strengths teach me about myself today?



DAY 5:
Releasing Negative Thought Patterns

"I release what no longer serves me and welcome positivity."

DAY 5: Releasing Negative Thought Patterns

INTENTION FOR THE DAY:

Today's practice is about releasing limiting or negative beliefs. Letting go of these thoughts is essential to making space for self-love. Our limiting beliefs often arise from past experiences, societal expectations, or internalised criticism, and they have a powerful impact on your emotional and mental well-being.

WHY IS THIS IMPORTANT?

By learning to challenge and reframe negative thoughts, you strengthen your resilience and begin to replace self-critical tendencies with self-compassion and optimism. Letting go of negativity makes room for personal growth and healing. The more you practice reframing negative thoughts, the easier it becomes to embrace your strengths, acknowledge your progress, and heal from past wounds.

GUIDED EXERCISE:

This exercise invites you to explore the expectations and biases that may shape how you see yourself. These external influences can impact your sense of self-worth, creating beliefs that may not truly reflect who you are. By identifying and questioning these expectations, you can begin to reclaim your authentic self.

Take a moment to reflect on the different areas of your life—family, past relationships, societal pressures, career, body image, and more. Write down any expectations, biases, or messages you've internalized that may have shaped how you see yourself. Now, challenge yourself to ask: Do these influences truly align with who I am as an individual? If not, how can I begin to shift this narrative to reflect my authentic self? Consider how you can take control of your future by rewriting the stories that no longer serve you and embracing a more empowered, self-directed path.



DAY 5: Releasing Negative Thought Patterns

"I release what no longer serves me and welcome positivity."

Write down a negative thought that has been holding you back. Challenge it's validity and reframe it into a positive or neutral statement.

Reflection: What did reframing this thought feel like? How can I remind myself to let go of others?

Reflection: What did reframing this thought feel like? How can I remind myself to let go of others?

DAY 6:
Connecting to Joy

"I choose joy and invite it into my life every day."

DAY 6: Connecting to Joy

INTENTION FOR THE DAY:

Today, you are invited to reconnect with joy. Life often pulls us in many directions, but joy is always available to us when we make space for it. Joy often resides in the simple pleasures of life: the warmth of a cup of tea, the sound of your favorite song, or the feeling of sunlight on your skin. When we make space for joy, we're actively choosing to appreciate life's little gifts. It's not about constantly feeling euphoric or avoiding challenges—it's about cultivating a mindset that allows joy to flow, even amidst life's ups and downs.

WHY IS THIS IMPORTANT?

Engaging in activities that bring you joy helps you cultivate a positive mindset and rejuvenates your spirit. When you make joy a priority, you create a sense of well-being that radiates through your thoughts and actions. Life doesn't need to be perfect for joy to exist, and you deserve to experience the lightness it brings.

GUIDED EXERCISE:

Put on your favourite song and let your body move freely to the rhythm.

Allow yourself to truly feel the music as it plays. Don't worry about how it looks or whether you're dancing "correctly." Instead, focus on how your body responds to the beat and the joy that flows through you, close your eyes if it helps. This is about feeling good in your own skin—letting the music guide you and embracing the positive energy it brings. As you move, notice where you feel light, where you feel grounded, and where your body is most in tune with the rhythm.

Remember, this is your moment to let loose!

Allow yourself to move in ways that feel natural, whether it's swaying, jumping, or even just tapping your feet. Don't censor yourself—just let go of any judgments about what is "good" or "bad" movement. You are not performing for anyone else. You're simply connecting with your body and allowing it to express itself joyfully.

Repeat this when you can!

DAY 6: Connecting to Joy

Write about a recent moment that brought you joy. What made it special, and how can you invite more moments like it into your life?

Reflection: How does prioritising joy shift the way I feel about myself? what is holding me back from experiencing more joy?

A red peony flower is the central focus, resting on a person's arm. The background is a warm, textured orange-brown. The text is overlaid on the right side of the flower.

DAY 7:
Creating a Self-Love Plan

"I am worthy of love, care, and kindness every day."

DAY 7: Creating a Self-Love Plan

INTENTION FOR THE DAY:

Today is about creating a plan to continue nurturing self-love after this week. This plan will support your ongoing journey and allow you to continue prioritising yourself. Showing up for yourself is a life long journey that requires you to put in the work, no one else is coming to do it for you.

WHY IS THIS IMPORTANT?

By committing to ongoing self-care, you establish a long-term relationship with yourself that promotes growth, self-respect, and empowerment. This plan will be your guide to staying accountable to yourself and ensuring self-love becomes a continuous, integral part of your life. Don't sit on the sideline, make a plan, work on it and see the results unfold!

GUIDED EXERCISE:

Write down three non-negotiable.

When we make ourselves a priority, we're not only nurturing our emotional and physical well-being but also creating lasting changes in our brain. Our brains have an incredible ability to adapt and change through a process called neuroplasticity. This means that the more we practice positive habits—whether they're acts of self-care, gratitude, or mindfulness—the stronger those neural pathways become. **"What fires together, wires together."** In simple terms, the more you engage in these positive practices, the more they become ingrained in your brain, making them easier to access over time.

Once you've identified your three non-negotiable acts, write them down somewhere visible as a daily reminder of your promise to yourself.

As you begin this process, remember that it may take time for these practices to feel automatic. Neuroplasticity is a gradual process, and rewiring your brain doesn't happen overnight. But by committing to your non-negotiable self-care acts for the next month, you'll be creating new pathways that will support you long after.

DAY 7: Creating a Self-Love Plan

Write 3 ways you will continue practising self-love after this week. What rituals or habits can you create to support yourself?

How will you keep yourself accountable? How will you continue to do your practises?



Lets reflect...



WEEKLY REFLECTIONS

WINS OF THE WEEK

Celebrate your achievements, however small they might be:

CHALLENGES ENCOUNTERED

Acknowledge any struggles or bottlenecks you faced:

LESSONS LEARNED

Identify learnings that can be carried forward:

NEXT WEEK'S PRELIMINARY THOUGHTS

Write down any early ideas or focus points for the upcoming week:

LET'S WORK TOGETHER



Your wellness journey is uniquely yours, a beautiful unfolding of self-discovery. If you feel called to dive deeper, to explore further into your well-being and mindfulness, consider joining me in a more tailored wellness coaching session. Together, we can navigate through your unique path, exploring with curiosity and unfolding each layer of your wellness journey with kindness and understanding. Your story is waiting to be unearthed, and I am here, ready to walk alongside you in every step of this transformative expedition. Let's journey together.

Head to my website to book a free discovery call.

[APRILMARIA.COM](https://aprilmaria.com)