

the
integrity
cleanse

YOUR ULTIMATE PATH TO PEACE

DIY WORKBOOK



BY MARTHA BECK

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Introduction

Martha's Integrity Cleanse

My Integrity Cleanse began with a restaurant ceiling fan.

Let me rewind. Many of you know that all my self-help methods begin with my own efforts to make myself less miserable. I read self-help books, I try all the techniques, come up with my own, then mix them up and play with them, looking for anything that will work. Along the way, I pick at the tangle of my own weirdness and dysfunction. I've done everything from cognitive behavioral therapy to poking myself in the head while hanging upside down and saying kind words to myself (this was recommended to me by either Caroline Myss or an opossum, I can't recall which).

What I'm trying to say here is that I'll do *anything* to feel better.

I've found some great self-help interventions during all this experimentation. The single best one, hands-down, is The Work™ of Byron Katie, a spiritual teacher who lived through years of deep depression; then had an enlightenment experience that left her in a place of perpetual joy and peace. She has remained free of suffering since this event, which occurred in 1986. Her process is to rigorously question and disprove her own thoughts, and her Work teaches others to do the same. I use her methodology every day

and would emphatically encourage you to discover her work for yourself, if you haven't already.

In the course of time, I was lucky enough to actually meet Byron Katie, and her husband, Stephen Mitchell, whom I consider to be one of the greatest spiritual poets writing in English. There's nothing more wonderful to me than getting to spend time with these masters and pepper them with questions. Once I began doing this, I noticed there was a profound difference between the way Katie chooses her actions and the way I had been choosing mine. Basically, I'd been questioning my thoughts in a way that mired me in hypocrisy. It was an innocent mistake, but watching Katie, I realized it was also a huge one. She lives in utter integrity. I'd been misusing her work to stay out of mine.

I suspect you're using the same kind of mind-tricks on yourself that I was using on myself. Whenever an unpleasant situation arose in my life, I'd question the thought that this was a bad thing. I'd say to myself, "This is *fine*! I will love what is, without alteration. Everything in the world is perfect right now. I'll just adjust to what everyone else wants."

I'd been living this way for a long time. Since most people are kind and courteous, it often worked out beautifully. I loved that. I occasionally encountered people who were cruel and exploitive. No problem; I found a way to love that, too. I thought that was what we were all supposed to do.

Then came my day of reckoning: The Day of the Ceiling Fan.

I was out to dinner with Katie, Stephen, and a few other friends. The hostess seated us at a table directly under a fan, where a strong wind ruffled our hair and clothing. As I grimly adjusted to loving this, Katie shocked me by *saying she wasn't comfortable and requesting that we be moved to a different table.*

Because you are a normal person, this may not shock you. But as a timid people-pleaser, I could barely believe my eyes. It was as if someone had just disproved the theory of gravity. I'd assumed that Katie would sit under a freezing fan and question her thoughts until she felt great with gale-force winds blowing through the linguine.

"Act from integrity. If people get upset, that's when the real fun starts."

"Why don't you just sit here and do The Work on ceiling fans?" I asked.

Katie laughed. "That's not how you use The Work."

"It's not?" My mind was being blown not only by the fan, but by Katie's response. "How do you know when to adjust to a situation and when to change it?"

"You know to do something, and you do it," said Katie simply.

"Know to do?" I repeated. "What do you mean?"

"It's like a meditation," Katie said patiently, like someone trying to explain physics to a Golden Retriever. "It just arises."

"You mean you do anything that shows up?"

"If it's in your integrity."

"But...but what if people get upset?"

"Oh," Katie beamed. "That's when the real fun starts."

I pondered this for a moment. Sure enough, when I got still and checked, I found a part of myself at the very center saying, it would be better not to sit under this fan. Around this quiet, obvious thought clustered a bevy of fears: fear of being demanding, fear of creating conflict, fear of looking entitled, fear of seeming arrogant, fear, fear, fear, fear, fear.

"I'd assumed that Katie would sit under a freezing fan and question her thoughts until she felt great with gale-force winds blowing through the linguine."

“When people don’t like what’s in your integrity,” Katie told me, “you know where you both stand. Clear and simple. Then you have a real relationship, one based on the truth.”

As we all moved to a more comfortable table, the implications of this began unrolling in my head. According to this new perspective, other people’s negative reactions would show me places where I needed to change, either by behaving in a way that broke the rules of the social system (if the waitress refused to move me, maybe I wouldn’t choose to go to that restaurant anymore), or by questioning the idea that the system wouldn’t change to accommodate me. I mean, what if I asked to move and—if you’re a people pleaser, this will sound crazy—*the waitress was fine with that?* What if no conflict ensued, and no one accused me of being selfish or entitled? I’d have to adjust my whole worldview, and accept that maybe the universe is actually friendlier than I thought.

I became obsessed with Katie’s phrase “*know to do*.” To Katie, “knowing to do” something seemed utterly self-evident. I had no clue what she meant. So I watched and listened and studied the way she moved through the world. Gradually I came to believe that “knowing to do” consists of being completely present and inwardly still, attentive to a benevolent intelligence that occupies the center of every being. This intelligence is your own and yet greater than your own. It rises into attention when there is no conflict from your mind. It is the experience of complete integrity, uncluttered by all mental concepts and socialized reactions.

This catalyzed a major reckoning for me. I saw that I’d been using my own self-help tools to live a life that was out of integrity. I had used them to cover my own fear, to avoid situations where I would have to speak up for myself, or where I might be perceived negatively. I had been coating all this behavior with a virtuous veneer, but really, to put it bluntly, I’d just been cowardly and dishonest.

After the ceiling fan incident, I “knew to do” one thing: begin living in accordance with complete integrity. It wasn’t a virtuous idea; it was motivated entirely by my desire to be as happy as Byron Katie always is. So, I decided that for a month, I wouldn’t do a single thing—neither would I speak, nor would I act—until I was certain it lay within my integrity.

Frequently, over the month—and then months, and then years—that followed, I found myself scared to death. The Integrity Cleanse is like adopting a pet tiger—not something you want to do on a whim. On the other hand, my Integrity Cleanse turned out to be so effective I began to wonder how I’d ever functioned without it. Discovering, speaking, and acting on your truth opens up the whole world. It’s complete freedom. If someone made a drug that felt as good as integrity, I’d be on it. But integrity costs nothing, is immediately accessible, and never runs out. It would be too good to be true, except that it’s too good to be false.

What Is Integrity, Exactly?

One reason integrity is such a powerful concept is that it's simple. There are no baroque moral or ethical details to integrity. It comes from the Latin word *integer*, which we use mathematically to describe a number that's whole—one thing, not divided into fractions. A person of integrity is one thing: one being, at all times and under all circumstances. If you're in integrity, you don't try to spin your image different ways for different people, or give different accounts of the same event. You are who you are, whole and undivided.

By contrast, a person who's in *duplicity* has two faces (for example, the one who flatters you to your face, and the one who insults you behind your back). Most of us live in multiplicity, showing up to please different people or get what we want by playing whatever role we think will give us an advantage. When I was in high school, I used to stop for a moment before going into each class, take a deep breath, and turn myself into whatever would please the teacher. I lived in complete multiplicity. I got straight A's. I also wanted to die (I say that from integrity, not exaggeration). Duplicity or multiplicity can make it easier to get what you want, unless what you want is health and happiness. They suck at that.

Rigidity, in contrast to integrity, is easy: you just memorize the rulebook and you're done. Integrity requires presence and the continuous sensing of what is most just, fair, true, loving. You'll see how those all blend together as you go deeper into integrity. You'll see that you cannot be in integrity without love and you cannot be in love without kindness. Ultimately every true thing is kind and every kind thing is true. And to live in kindness, with yourself and everyone else, is to occupy a gentle universe.

“Ultimately, every true thing is kind and every kind thing is true.”

I believe that the process of accessing integrity opens a channel between you and an enormous power that is always loving you, always trying to help you, always supporting you, always breathing health into your body and your mind. This power adores you. It cares about every worried thought, every momentary risk, every hangnail you might have. By committing to integrity, you're allowing all the love of that power into your life.

Locating Your Integrity

How do we know what is in our integrity? If you're familiar with my work, you know that I sometimes describe human psychology as being divided into two different beings that live within each of us. I call these the essential self and the social self. The essential self is who you're born to be; it's your genetic legacy, your animal self. It's what you really think, feel, know, want. Your essential self is essential in two ways: it is your essence, what you really are, and it's absolutely necessary if you're going to live your right life.

The social self is also necessary because we are, by evolution, social apes. We need to connect with each other. Our sense of safety is intrinsically tied up with our connection with others of our own species. And that means that at moments when our natural impulses differ from the demands of the group (or even one other person) we often abandon our essential selves. In effect, we go blind to our deepest selves to fit in with other people.

“We go blind to our deepest selves to fit in with other people.”

Losing our true selves is so painful it seems insane. (It is.) The reason we do it is simple: fear. We're afraid that what our essential selves want to do will contradict what others want, and then we'll be cut off, cast out, alone. We balk at that before it ever has a chance to happen. For a socially-dependent creature, to disagree feels catastrophic.

So we choose conformity over integrity time after time. Sometimes this takes a very subtle form, such as simply believing what other people say, even if your gut is telling you they're wrong. You'll keep believing whatever will help you fit in, even when you're alone. Every act may be dictated by the imagined reaction of other people to whatever you're doing.

The ability to sense our own integrity diminishes every time we worry what other people are thinking or saying or doing about us. The basic belief that we must think, say, and do whatever other people want is deeply rutted in the brain, a high-speed thoroughfare.

If you decide to join me on the Integrity Cleanse, you'll get back in touch with the still,

small voice of your essential self. This is the part of you that “knows to do.” First you’ll learn to hear this voice, to listen to it above everything else. Then you’ll learn some techniques for doing what your integrity suggests, right out in front of God and everybody.

The Importance of Being Present

One of my favorite sayings, from the Indian teacher Amrit Desai Gurudev, is “I exist in perpetual creative response to whatever is present.” The only moment you have access to your integrity is this one. Oops! It’s gone. Now you must reach into this moment, and this one, and this one.

Your truth (along with every effective spiritual teaching) will always tell you that presence is the access point to integrity. Only now, right now, does integrity have space to arise. That makes integrity very, very simple. You don’t have to do or change anything if your whole attention is focused on being present with what you’re experiencing right now. There’s no calculation, no scheming. Only the immediacy of a wild animal.

When you act from this state, you’re inwardly very still. There’s something about perfect stillness that allows integrity to come up without creating a riot against competing belief systems. You can’t fight this moment; it is as it is. You can only move more deeply into it, by finding the truth within yourself. Then, the right action arises almost magically, and happens automatically.

“There’s something about perfect stillness that allows integrity to come up without creating a riot against competing belief systems.”

A Short History of the Integrity Cleanse Course

My perpetual mode of yammering about what excites me meant that once I'd embarked on my own integrity cleanse, everyone around me heard a lot about it. Before long my team and I had put together a telecourse version of the Cleanse. I would have shouted out my theories on integrity to three people and a garden gnome, but to everyone's surprise*, lots of people signed up. Apparently, my friends and I weren't the only ones who wanted to be happy and had a hunch integrity would help.

The telecourse went so well, and attendees had so many transformative experiences, that we ran it again six months later. You'd think the blush would have been off the rose by then, but no, people kept asking for more. So, for those who didn't get the chance to participate—and for those ready to refresh what they learned—we whopped up this DIY version of the course. This is something you can launch at your own best moment, and complete at your own leisure. It's meant to help you learn and practice at your own pace, because *that's integrity, my friend*.

*Martha Beck staff note: We were not surprised.

Using This DIY Kit

Since this DIY kit is designed to be done on your terms, please take as long as you need to work through each unit. Create a cleanse that suits your learning style and the demands of your life. In other words, use this from inside your integrity.

Each unit focuses on a different aspect of living a life of integrity. Each offers exercises, a case study from the telecourse, and a few comments from me that people seemed to like.

- The Introduction welcomes you into the process and walks you through a simple but crucial exercise to help you calibrate your sense of “knowing to do.” It will clarify the feeling of integrity and non-integrity as you yourself experience them.
- Unit One teaches you to access the places where we aren't in integrity. We'll use the powerful metaphor of your living space, since you reflect your inner life in your outer life.

- Unit Two focuses on decision-making—how to do it from integrity, and what to do when you seem to be getting conflicting signals.
- Unit Three coaches you through the issue of integrity in personal relationships, simplifying situations that may seem very complex when you're not in integrity.
- Unit Four offers techniques for sustaining integrity beyond the course.

The kit also includes the Integrity Cleanse telecourse audios, and will work best if you listen to the audio recordings in conjunction with this workbook.

Now, shall we begin?

EXERCISE: ACCESSING YOUR “SENSE OF INTEGRITY”

One of the problems many of us have when it comes to knowing our integrity is that we try to *think* what we should do. But the way we recognize integrity is by the way it *feels*, physically and emotionally. Research shows that our bodies tense when we lie—even unintentionally—and that lying increases our heart rate, blood pressure, perspiration, and blinking (among many other indicators). They relax when we tell the truth, or do something that aligns with our real preferences.

The most important thing you can do for your integrity cleanse is to *familiarize yourself with the sensations you experience when you are in absolute alignment with truth, and when you are out of alignment*. I call this knowing your “**sense of integrity**.”

It isn't hard to recognize your **sense of integrity**; it just takes a little practice. You have many experiences of sensing your integrity, and sensing a departure from the truth. This exercise brings several experiences together in your memory, so that you can find the “flavor” or pure integrity and contrast it with the “flavor” of duplicity. In the columns below, write down a few words to remind you of times suggested by the prompts.

INTEGRITY	NOT INTEGRITY
A time you said no to someone and it felt right	A time you said no to someone and it didn't feel right
A time you said yes to someone and it felt right	A time you said yes to someone and it didn't feel right.
A time you did something for your career that felt right	A time you did something for your career that didn't feel right
A time you did something for a friend that felt right	A time you did something for a friend that didn't feel right
A time you did something for your health that felt right	A time you did something for your health that didn't feel right
A time you made a significant life change and it felt right	A time you made a significant life change and it didn't feel right
A time you spoke up and it felt right	A time you spoke up and it didn't feel right
A time you kept silent and it felt right	A time you kept silent and it didn't feel right

Once you've filled out all the blanks above, read slowly through your answers in the **column on the right**.

Notice what happens to:

- your breathing (Does it get slower, faster, deeper, more shallow?)
- your gut (Does it feel sick, empty, twisted, hot, cold?)
- your muscles (Do they tighten? Where? What does it feel like?)
- your physical posture (Do you hunch, curl your shoulders, clench?)
- your emotions (Do you feel fear, anger, sadness, or any variation of these?)

Write down some words or phrases that come to you when you dwell on the times things felt wrong to you. These words describe your unique and personal sensation of being out of integrity.

Now, do the same with the left-hand column: feel into each of these moments and learn what they all have in common. Note down any words or phrases that keep you connected to these feelings. This is what *integrity* feels like in your body.

One of the key aspects of the Integrity Cleanse is to become intimate with the difference between these two feelings. Stop and sense them as you go about your day. After an experience or conversation, take time to notice whether you felt in or out of integrity, and at which moments. Before long, you'll become more aware of your *sense of integrity*, until it's functioning as the finely tuned instrument it was designed to be.

Your *sense of integrity* will be your anchor throughout this course. Sometimes your mind will try to make the integrity cleanse a complex and confusing process. If you feel this way, come back to this exercise and breathe into what you already know in your bones, your heart, your cells. Your body is an integrity-sensing machine. Use it!

BONUS: Integrity Shortcut

Here's a go-to refrain I use when I need to get to my sense of integrity under pressure:

Surrender, breathe, allow, receive

UNIT I

Blind Spots & Spring Cleaning

Overview

If you're reading this, there's a good chance you're basically an honest person. Most of the lies you tell aren't conscious; they're so deeply socialized into you that you consider them normal, appropriate behavior.

That's why in this first unit, we're targeting your blind spots. Your blind spots conceal the gaps between yourself and the truth, and we're about to close some of those gaps. As you start to connect with the truth in these areas, you'll find yourself experiencing small epiphanies and new, liberating perspectives.

We're going to start off your Integrity Cleanse by looking at an external symbol of your inner life: your home. The way we create, shape, and then talk about our home environments tends to be a very accurate metaphorical mirror of our inner lives. It's the perfect place to look for blind spots in your integrity.

“If you knew for certain that you were infinitely loved, always safe, and incapable of making a mistake, how would you feel? What would you change?”

EXERCISE 1

SPRING-CLEANING YOUR LIFE

1. In the space below, write a brief description of your home, the physical house (apartment, yurt, refrigerator box, etc.) where you live.

2. Now, as you mentally or physically tour your living space, identify your LEAST FAVORITE PLACE in your home. It may be big or small, awful, or just slightly less appealing than the rest of your living space. In any case, what is it about this particular spot in your home that you DON'T like?

3. Thinking about this least favorite place in your home, list three adjectives that describe it. For example, maybe there's a junk drawer that's "messy, cluttered, and jumbled," or a bathroom that's "dark, unfinished, and ugly." Write down three adjectives that sound accurate:

a. _____

b. _____

c. _____

4. Ask yourself: "What area of my life as a whole can be described by the adjectives in question #3?" For example, if your least favorite place is "messy, cluttered, and jumbled," maybe your relationship with your parents, your career, or your physical health feels that way as well. If it's "dark, unfinished, and ugly," maybe you have a traumatic experience that still dominates your life with dark, unfinished, ugly feelings. What part of your life comes to mind when you consider the adjectives you wrote down in Question #3? Write it in the space below:

5. Now, thinking of the area of your life you just identified, you're going to write down what you wish were different. For example, "I wish my parents really understood me," or "I wish my children would do what I say," or "I wish I could get over my childhood abuse." Write down three things you wish were different in the troubling situation:

a. In regard to this area of my life, I wish that:

b. In regard to this area of my life, I also wish that:

c. In regard to this area of my life, I also wish that:

6. Using the sentences you just wrote down in Question 5, create three sentences changing “I wish” to “I need.” For example, if you wrote, “I wish my parents really understood me,” change that to, “I need my parents to really understand me. If you wrote, “I wish I could get over my abuse,” write, “I need to get over my abuse.”

a.

b.

c.

7. Read over the three “need” sentences above. Hold them in mind, one by one. While holding each thought, scan your body and emotions to see what you’re feeling. **If the sentence doesn’t feel like your sense of integrity, allow yourself to consider that it may be a lie.**

8. If you get a negative response—in other words, if the “I need” sentence doesn’t trigger that deep, solid feeling of being in full integrity, begin logically thinking of ways the sentence could be wrong. For example, if you wrote “I need my parents to really understand me,” notice that they don’t understand you, and you’re still alive. If you wrote, “I need to get over my abuse,” you might consider that you’re getting more wisdom and compassion out of processing your feelings than you would if they went away right now. In the blanks below, write down reasons why you **don’t** need the things you’ve been thinking you need.

a.

b.

C.

9. Read over the last set of statements, feeling each one with your **sense of integrity**. Keep modifying and looking for new ways of understanding each sentence until you get the relaxing, open sensation of coming into integrity.

WARNING!

This activity may bring up enormous resistance from your ego. It will not want to let go of its favorite victim stories, even if they make you miserable. This is where you need to focus on the sense of integrity, how much peace and liberation it brings, even if your pride feels wounded.

If you can stay with your integrity, rather than falling into old stories, you'll feel your inner life beginning to release and open up. Repeat this entire exercise with all the areas of your living space that don't feel completely clear and relaxing to you. **By the time you've gone through the whole space (it may take years; we're not in a hurry) your entire life will have become more congruent, peaceful, and joyful.**

Case Study: Diane

Diane's Unit 1 assignment revealed her wardrobe as a place in her home that represented a blind spot. She described the wardrobe as "disorganized, outdated and tangled." As she worked through the exercise, Diane saw that her mind was full of outdated and disorganized beliefs, such as, "The world is out to get me," "No one cares," "No one's there for me."

As she examined these beliefs by accessing her **sense of integrity**, Diane was delighted to find that none of them felt true. They were just outdated and disorganized. She had begun the coaching session somewhat discouraged due to feelings of inadequacy and tangledness. She'd come to the session with a grim self-admonition that, "Now the work really begins."

With some encouragement, Diane identified the belief "now the work begins" as the root of her inner tension and turmoil. She tried out a different belief, "now the work is over," and immediately noticed that this resonated with her sense of integrity.

As she spent more and more time contemplating this issue, Diane began to see that she constantly worked to juggle all the beliefs her ego used to make itself feel safe. Eventually she realized that, "We don't have to work any harder than the sun has to work to shine; we just are." I advised Diane to interrupt this tangle of disorganized thoughts by testing the idea that that we are all, in our essence, infinitely loved and safe.

The ego is a false, small self made of thoughts, not truth. It rests on a foundation of lies you adopted at some point in order to survive. The ego will fight you as you move into integrity because it lives on fear, and believes that if you become absolutely truthful, it will die. The ego happens to be right. That miserable, outdated, disorganized, tangled part of you is not you. Like Diane, you'll find your ego shaken and dislodged by integrity. What will remain afterward is something purer, clearer, and more powerful; your consciousness in alignment with the truth.

During our coaching session, I suggested that Diane begin the process of clearing the actual, physical wardrobe in her house. I suggested she sort through the box using Marie Kondo's method of asking, in regard to each item, "Does this object spark joy?" If the answer was yes, I suggested that Diane should keep the object. If the answer was no, she should discard it.

The simple act of bringing that physical space into greater alignment with integrity began moving Diane's mind into more harmony and clarity. Do the same for an area in your living space, and you'll find that the way we do anything is the way we do everything—cleaning up a space in your house creates a corresponding change in your mind and life.

TIP

Create a spot in your house — no matter how small — that's absolutely clear and clean. Go there, and relax into the truth until you feel peace (if you're not in peace, you're not in integrity). If all else fails, try relaxing into the simple admission that you've been out of integrity. Even that will move you forward, because acknowledging our messes is always the first step to cleaning up our lives.

EXERCISE 2

MEDITATION TO ACCESS INTEGRITY

I encourage you to regularly practice this breathing meditation, which pops you very quickly into integrity. It's based on the book *Proof of Heaven*, which the neurosurgeon Eben Alexander wrote about his prolonged near-death experience. He writes that when he came to after his coma, he had been told three fundamental truths about the experience of life. I like to repeat Alexander's three takeaways, to help ground myself in my sense of integrity.

Breathe in, then out, thinking one of the following phrases with each exhalation:

On the first out-breath, think the words *I am infinitely loved*;
On the next out-breath, think *I am always safe*;
On the third out-breath, think *I cannot make mistakes*.

This Week's Challenge

Each day this week, apply this Spring-Clean worksheet to a different spot in your home, office, car, or any other place where you spend time. Ask, "What's my least favorite thing about this space?" And use the additional worksheets below. Notice how you create a self-portrait in each spot, and how this leads you to the places you need to clean up in your life.

In addition, change one thing each day in your physical living space that makes it feel more in alignment with the way you'd like it to look and feel. Notice how much easier it is to do this when you are also using your sense of integrity to examine the thoughts that have kept your inner life from being less than calm and harmonious.

WORKSHEET SPRING-CLEANING YOUR LIFE

1. In the space below, write a brief description of your home, the physical house (apartment, yurt, refrigerator box, etc.) where you live.

2. Now, as you mentally or physically tour your living space, identify your LEAST FAVORITE PLACE in your home. It may be big or small, awful, or just slightly less appealing than the rest of your living space. In any case, what is it about this particular spot in your home that you DON'T like?

3. Thinking about this least favorite place in your home, list three adjectives that describe it. For example, maybe there's a junk drawer that's "messy, cluttered, and jumbled," or a bathroom that's "dark, unfinished, and ugly." Write down three adjectives that sound accurate:

a. _____

b. _____

c. _____

4. Ask yourself: "What area of my life as a whole can be described by the adjectives in question #3?" For example, if your least favorite place is "messy, cluttered, and jumbled," maybe your relationship with your parents, your career, or your physical health feels that way as well. If it's "dark, unfinished, and ugly," maybe you have a traumatic experience that still dominates your life with dark, unfinished, ugly feelings. What part of your life comes to mind when you consider the adjectives you wrote down in Question #3? Write it in the space below:

5. Now, thinking of the area of your life you just identified, you're going to write down what you wish were different. For example, "I wish my parents really understood me," or "I wish my children would do what I say," or "I wish I could get over my childhood abuse." Write down three things you wish were different in the troubling situation:

a. In regard to this area of my life, I wish that:

b. In regard to this area of my life, I also wish that:

c. In regard to this area of my life, I also wish that:

6. Using the sentences you just wrote down in Question 5, create three sentences changing "I wish" to "I need." For example, if you wrote, "I wish my parents really understood me," change that to, "I need my parents to really understand me. If you wrote, "I wish I could get over my abuse," write, "I need to get over my abuse."

a.

b.

c.

7. Read over the three “need” sentences above. Hold them in mind, one by one. While holding each thought, scan your body and emotions to see what you’re feeling. **If the sentence doesn’t feel like your sense of integrity, allow yourself to consider that it may be a lie.**

8. If you get a negative response—in other words, if the “I need” sentence doesn’t trigger that deep, solid feeling of being in full integrity, begin logically thinking of ways the sentence could be wrong. For example, if you wrote “I need my parents to really understand me,” notice that they don’t understand you, and you’re still alive. If you wrote, “I need to get over my abuse,” you might consider that you’re getting more wisdom and compassion out of processing your feelings than you would if they went away right now. In the blanks below, write down reasons why you **don’t** need the things you’ve been thinking you need.

- a. _____

- b. _____

- c. _____

9. Read over the last set of statements, feeling each one with your **sense of integrity**. Keep modifying and looking for new ways of understanding each sentence until you get the relaxing, open sensation of coming into integrity.

UNIT II

Keeping Your Motives Pure

Overview

“To create a new, healthier order, you must first destroy the current order.”

Unless you’re already living in total integrity, you make all your action decisions based on what you think is right. Your mind loves rigid value systems: this is always good, that is always bad, this is right, that is wrong, never do this, always do that.

But sometimes, you’re simply not clear about what you should do next. Maybe you think that divorce is never okay, but at a deep level you know your spouse is destructive and frightening. Or you believe you should be an accountant, but your true self wants to be a dog trainer. This creates a conflicted feeling I call a YesNo.

To come into full integrity, you have to find the places where you feel a YesNo, figure out whether the Yes or the No is in your integrity, and change your actions to align with your sense of truth.

This is trickier than it may sound, because your belief system doesn’t feel arbitrary or questionable to you. It feels like reality. You can’t even see that it’s there, for the same reason you can’t see the color of your own eyes. It’s a huge conceptual leap to see that your “reality” may be distorted, inaccurate. It takes enormous courage and honesty to admit, “The very fundamental axioms of my behavior may not be in integrity,” and then do what’s in integrity, despite the fear and resistance of your ego.

Acting on integrity in ways that defy your old belief system may look crazy, sinful, bizarre, totally unacceptable to your ego. It can—will—bring up intense conflicting emotions.

Fortunately, wherever our actions don't align with our deepest truth, we get more and more miserable. We choose situations that keep increasing our suffering, to help us let go of beliefs that aren't serving us and make different action choices. The presence of suffering means, "This action is out of integrity for me; I just need to figure out where the lie is, and change my behavior to match my truth." Remember to feel for the truth, not with emotions and definitely not with thoughts, but with the stillness and peace that comes to us when we attend to our **sense of integrity**.

"The peace we need in our lives is not a rock, it's a river. It isn't rigid, it flows."

You don't have to force yourself through the total transformation of your belief system all at once—that can be so intense it might incapacitate you. Allow the truth to come into consciousness slowly, action by action.

Imagine that your truth (your internal YES reaction) is oil. Your misperceptions (NO reactions) are water. If you're agitated, they seem to blend, and you can't sort them out. But if you put the jar down and just let the oil rise to the surface, it will. It just bubbles up, bubble by bubble, until it's pure. Then, calmly and peacefully, you can make action choices based in pure integrity.

At the stage of changing your actions, your integrity practice relies on being willing to get still. You can't find your way integrity if your mind is turbulent and if you're fixated on things around you. Especially at first, you need to be quiet—either sitting still or walking by yourself, away from other people. Be gentle, and give yourself time and space in the stillness.

EXERCISE 1

MAKING DECISIONS FROM A PLACE OF INTEGRITY

There are three components to every decision you make, from the smallest choice (what shall I wear today?) to the largest (should I get a tattoo on my forehead?). The three components are:

1. The deepest truth about what you feel, desire, or know—your instincts.
2. The logical reasoning in your mind—the story you tell about what decision you should make and why. Your thoughts.
3. The actual choices you make and the actions you take.

When your instincts, thoughts, and actions all say, “Yes,” that’s a true yes. When they all say “No,” it’s a true no. When you get a true yes or no, there is nothing in your actions that serves any agenda except the expression of your integrity. When you do something that’s not in alignment with your deepest truth, it’s because attachment to a fixed idea tells you to do something else.

For example, say your friend Chris asks you to go for a walk, and you don’t want to go because you’re exhausted. You override your real desires and say yes because you think, “It wouldn’t be nice to say no,” or “I really need the exercise.” Or maybe you’re the one who’s raring for a walk, while Chris is reluctant. You decide not to go because you think, “Chris would be lonely if I left,” or “It’s always best to stick together.”

“When you do something that’s not in alignment with your deepest truth, it’s because attachment to a fixed idea tells you to do something else.”

Whenever you're doing something that doesn't feel deeply right to you, you split yourself. Instead of integrity (being just one thing), you're in duplicity (two things) or multiplicity (many conflicting things). This inner contradiction, especially as it builds up over hundreds of choices, ends up causing a great deal of suffering. To end that suffering, you must return over and over to your **sense of integrity**.

The Feeling of a Decision Made in Integrity

1. Remember a time you were frightened or conflicted about a decision, but you ultimately chose to do what you deeply wanted. This could be a tiny decision (going to a movie with a loved one instead of working) or a huge one (marrying the person you loved despite social pressure to end the relationship). What was the decision?

2. What emotional and physical sensations accompanied the decision? Were you frightened, angry, defiant, depressed, excited?

3. What happened in the aftermath of the decision? How do you feel about it now?

If you noticed that you felt nervous or afraid when you were making this decision, you're tracking integrity. Doing something that's right for you, despite mental pressure against the decision, is scary. It's crucial to recognize that fear may arise whether or not you're acting in integrity.

Once we've made a decision and taken action, fear fades and we are left with another set of feelings: peace (in the case of a truth-based choice), guilt and anxiety, or resentment and anger.

We tend to feel guilty and anxious when we do something right that our thinking tells us is wrong. We feel resentment and anger when we do something wrong for us, that our thoughts tell us is right. Now, to help you know how that feels, let's look at a time you've made a decision that didn't turn out to be in harmony with your true happiness.

The Feeling of a 'YesNo' Decision

1. Think of a decision you made that left you feeling either guilty and anxious, or resentful and angry. Maybe you took on more work than you could do, or stayed home when you really wanted to go dancing because you felt fat and unattractive. What was the decision?

2. Feel the difference between the “true yes” you just described in Question 1, and the mixed “YesNo” of an unclear decision. Describe how each one feels, and how they differ:

3. Looking back on your YesNo decision, what do you now see you wanted to do, in your heart of hearts? What felt most deeply right to you?

4. What thought(s) arose in your head that conflicted with your deepest feelings? See if you can think of three:

a.

b.

c.

Hold each of these thoughts in your mind and check with your **sense of integrity**. Does each thought feel true? Do all of them feel true? Which ones, if any, are in your integrity, and which are not? Notice how the untrue thoughts led to situations that didn’t serve you, and true ones tried to lead you in a more useful direction.

Now, use your awareness of your past YesNo decision to look at a choice you are trying to make in the present.

Cleaning Up Your Next 'YesNo' Decision

1. Think of a decision you're making right now, or one you plan to make in the near future, where you don't feel certain what's right for you. What is the decision?

2. If you had a small stroke that had no effect except that it left you unable to think of any reasons not to do what feels most true to you in this situation, what would you do?

3. What thoughts are telling you to act in opposition to these instincts? Write down as many as you can think of.

4. One by one, hold each of the oppositional thoughts in your mind, and check in your body. Does the thought resonate with your **sense of integrity**, or is it based on fear?

5. If you were to drop all the fear-based thoughts connected to this decision, would you be motivated to say Yes, or No? Or would you say Yes to certain aspects of the decision, and No to others? For example, if you're contemplating getting a job, maybe your integrity is leading you toward certain types of task, and away from others. Or you're being steered toward one work situation and away from another. Break the decision into chunks so small that you can get a clear Yes or a clear No *for each component part*.

6. Visualize a decision or set of decisions you could make that would keep you in your integrity all the way through this decision-making process. You may not be able to enact your ideal right from the start, but this visualization will make it much more clear to you where you are in or out of integrity, and you'll do better with each decision going forward as long as you let your integrity guide you.

“The suffering, as a service to you, escalates and escalates and escalates, because integrity wants you to hear its voice. It doesn’t want to hurt you, but if you keep not listening, you end up in pain. And the pain gets stronger until you listen. That’s why suffering is such a gift.”

Case Study: Sarah

Sarah was experiencing a YesNo reaction when she thought about her new job. On one hand, she said, she felt it had potential to be a dream job, one where she felt she was contributing to the world. On the other hand, part of her would have liked to stay at home in pajamas with her kids.

With some coaching, Sarah found the lie in the statement “I need to go to a job to contribute to the world.” By checking with her **sense of integrity**, she was also able to clarify that she didn’t like the idea of staying home all the time either. Her resistance to the job had to do with a feeling that having a job meant allowing her time to be not her own—allowing other people to own her time and keep her confined.

Sarah identified a belief she’d been holding unconsciously: “If I’m not absolutely, totally disconnected from everything, then I can’t own my power to decide my own day.” She found that it felt untrue. In the past, she’d often experienced collaboration that felt unconfined.

With her new, more truthful viewpoint, Sarah felt a surge of energy to go into her new job from a place of integrity. She felt deeply that if she did this, she would find people who could work with her as an equal. At the very worst, if she gave the job that chance and it did feel wrong, she could leave. She felt less conflicted, and able to move forward with less fear as she stayed in integrity.

EXERCISE 2

Find a Belief that Causes Negative Emotion, and Feel for Areas of Untruth In the Painful Belief.

As you go through The Integrity Cleanse, you'll encounter many specific beliefs that may be keeping you out of total integrity. Identify any belief whatsoever that creates negative physical or emotional reactions within you, then write the belief down below (later you can use a notebook to write as many thoughts as you want). Make sure it's the scariest, ugliest version of your tormenting thought—don't pretty it up. If you think, "Everyone hates me," don't change it to "Not everyone loves me." Go for the gut-wrenching worst.

Feel for Areas of Untruth in the Painful Belief.

Holding the painful belief above in your mind, consult your **sense of integrity**. Focusing your attention on your body and emotions, not your thoughts, ask yourself: does this painful belief trigger the feeling of a truth, or a lie?

Circle one:

More like a lie

More like the truth

If you can't tell, take the belief apart to see if some aspects of it feel like truth, while others feel like untruth. For example, you may be frightened by the thought, "My kids will grow up and leave me forever." If you test each aspect of the belief against your sense of integrity, you may find that "My kids will grow up" actually feels true, but the thought "they will leave me forever" feels like a lie. What part(s) of the belief you wrote above feel true? What part(s) feels false?

This Week's Challenge

This week, before you offer a quick “Yes” or “No” to anyone, for any reason, ask for time to stop and feel into the choice. If you have the courage, make each decision in accordance with your integrity. If you do something that’s out of integrity, stop and find the thoughts that led you into that action.

UNIT III

Integrity in Relationships

Overview

As you may have noticed by now, making choices that are in perfect alignment with your integrity can lead to some interesting social interactions. Not everyone around you necessarily celebrates your integrity. Those who are out of their own integrity may even protest or oppose you.

“The Integrity Cleanse is a catalyst that starts to create your village. As you become your true self, you only spend time on the people and activities that nourish your soul.”

The way people react to your Integrity Cleanse gives you valuable information about how much you want to share with each person. Integrity ultimately loves everyone, but it doesn't cooperate with behaviors that feel dishonest, painful, or wrong. You can love destructive people unconditionally when you also honor your own integrity by keeping the destruction from invading your space.

In this unit we'll be evaluating how to navigate your social world, establishing degrees of intimacy that feel truthful and allow you to live in love for everyone. Letting someone closer than your integrity wants them causes feelings like fear, anger, and despair. Keeping someone at a distance when your integrity longs for more contact creates loneliness and isolation. Your **sense of integrity** will tell you exactly how to create the right level of intimacy with each person, at any time.

Most people lie. And when they lie, they're relying on your social self to join them in the lie, so that there's no conflict and everything goes along harmoniously. It's very typical to find your truth, share it with another person, and get a negative response. This may trigger fear-based thoughts that make you question your own perceptions.

When people aren't aligned with your integrity and they want or expect you to act in ways that aren't right for you, being in close relationship with them causes tremendous stress. And as you become true to yourself, those relationships will become less and less

intimate. Strangely, getting more distance from these people will increase your ability to honestly love them. Once the integrity of your own life has safe boundaries from destructive pressure, you can truly and freely love.

“We lie our way through our lives to get people to like us, and then we find out they didn’t like us because we were lying.”

If you’re relation to people of integrity and you’re always in your integrity, all you need is clear communication to get along famously. If all your relationships are failing, it may be that your lack of integrity, known or unknown, is being reproduced in every interaction you have with anyone.

If you’re in integrity and other people are out of integrity, you may be constantly surprised, disappointed, and hurt. People may enter your life, get too close, and begin creating upheaval and pain. Ask yourself if you’re over-tolerating bad behavior, looking at potential instead of actual behavior, or projecting onto others a goodness they aren’t actually displaying

If you consistently have the same thing go wrong in relationship after relationship, it’s probably because you have a blind spot. You need to look deeply at your relationship patterns and beliefs to find out where you’re in error.

If you want more people in your space, you have to risk openness and vulnerability. And that can be a big ask. You may have experienced trauma as a child that left you with unconscious beliefs like, “I can’t be loved,” “It’s not safe to reach out,” “I don’t want to be rejected again; that hurt too much.”

Those trauma-thoughts create a feeling of a vacuum, of isolation. You may have thoughts like: “I want to be seen by people who will love me, but I want it with absolutely no risk.” Your sense of integrity will tell you, if you get quiet and listen, that this isn’t a realistic possibility—there is always risk in vulnerability.

Once a relationship has formed, you may start pushing down unspoken feelings and truths. You may fail to acknowledge discomfort, or silently accept less intimacy than you

want. This detaches you from integrity, until eventually you won't even know what the problem is or what you want. If that describes you, you'll need to be physically away from other people for a while, to re-connect with your integrity outside the impact of social pressure.

*“One way of getting out of integrity is to believe that you can force other people to do what you think they should. ‘If only I could fix that person,’ we think. Good luck with that. You can’t fix anyone but yourself. Your **sense of integrity** will tell you that.”*

So, for example, if my loved one starts drinking heavily, that's his or her own business. If the drinking begins impinging on my life, that's my business. I have to re-establish my own integrity, not anyone else's. So, for example, it may feel in my integrity to organize an intervention and invite them to go to rehab. If they do, that may allow me to continue being intimately connected to them. But I need to tell my truth in some very, very pointed way. I can tell my truth. That's all. What I can't do is to get into anyone else's mind or life and change it for them.

“I can tell my truth. That's all. What I can't do is to get into anyone else's mind or life and change it for them.”

Telling the Truth to Your Loved Ones

No dishonest relationships. That's the bottom line when you're on a total integrity cleanse. Does this sound harsh? Well, ask yourself how you'd like it if the people you love were dishonest with you. If your significant other actually didn't like you at all, but was lying and saying they did, they'd eventually come to hate you—that's what extended lying does. Is that the kind of relationship you want? I doubt it. As a rule, people want to be loved for real. We want our lives, and our loves, to be genuine.

The implication of this is that to create good relationships, we must tell the truth and act in integrity with all other people. Unless that's already what you're doing, the prospect of coming into total integrity, in every relationship, may feel daunting.

This is because relationships are like jigsaw puzzles. You're one piece of a puzzle, and your close associates are the pieces who connect with your piece. If your shape changes, all the people connected to you must do one of two things: either change to match your integrity, or else allow distance and pressure that hasn't existed before. This is challenging, to be sure. But the alternative—staying in a contorted shape so you fit in the space others want you to fill—is a violation of your truth. And that's painful.

This phase of your integrity cleanse will challenge you to tell the truth to the people you trust most. One of three things may happen then. The first is that your loved ones may be grateful to hear your truth, and share more of themselves as well. This will make your life much, much more loving and harmonious.

The second possibility is that they won't want to accept your true self—at least not in this moment—and you'll want to seek out people who appreciate your integrity. If this sounds difficult or even baffling, a good therapist or coach can be a perfect, nonjudgmental source of understanding whose entire job is helping you get aligned with your integrity.

The third thing that can happen is that as you begin to embrace your integrity, you find yourself so repelled by the reactions of certain people that you'll create much more distance, and the relationship will become much more distant. This will allow you to love difficult people unconditionally—at a distance. (We can unconditionally love ax murderers, for example, but only when they're out of our houses and safely in prison.)

EXERCISE 1

IDENTIFY YOUR REFERENCE GROUP

Think of the five or six people you see often, whose opinions matter to you. (A good rule of thumb: when buying clothes, food, books, and so on, you stop to consider what these people will think of your choices. When deciding what to do or say, you think about how these people will react.)

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____
6. _____

The Goldilocks Target: Establishing How Much Intimacy Your Integrity Wants with Each Person

This quiz will help you estimate how much intimacy you'd have with each person in your reference group if you were acting in complete harmony with your integrity. Choose one person from your reference group, and go through all the following questions in regard to that individual.

SECTION ONE: WHAT I WANT

On a scale from 0 to 10, with 0 meaning "absolutely none," and 10 meaning, "absolutely all," how much of your time do you want to spend with this person?	
On a scale from 0 to 10, with 0 meaning "nothing" and 10 meaning "everything," how much information about yourself do you want to share with this person?	

On a scale from 0 to 10, with 0 meaning “nothing” and 10 meaning “everything,” how much do you want to know about this person’s life, thoughts, and feelings?	
On a scale from 0 to 10, with 0 meaning “never” and 10 meaning “all the time,” how much do you want this person to physically touch you?	
On a scale from 0 to 10, with 0 meaning “never” and 10 meaning “always,” how much do you want this person’s input when you make a decision?	
On a scale from 0 to 10, with 0 meaning “never” and 10 meaning “always,” how much do you feel you can be your true self around this person?	
On a scale from 0 to 10, with 0 meaning “not at all” and 10 meaning “completely,” how much do you trust this person?	
On a scale from 0 to 10, with 0 meaning, “not at all” and 10 meaning “very much,” how much do you enjoy thinking about this person?	
On a scale from 0 to 10, with 0 meaning, “never” and 10 meaning “always,” how often do this person’s actions match his or her words?	
On a scale from 0 to 10, with 0 meaning, “really bad” and 10 meaning “really good,” how do you usually feel after interacting with this person?	

To score, simply add up all the numbers and write the total here: _____

You can go to the “Intimacy Target” on page 47 and put the person’s name in the circle that matches his or her score.

SECTION TWO: WHAT I’VE GOT

Now answer the following questions for the same individual:

On a scale from 0 to 10, with 0 meaning “absolutely none,” and 10 meaning “absolutely all,” how much of your time do spend with this person?	
On a scale from 0 to 10, with 0 meaning “nothing” and 10 meaning “everything,” how much information about yourself do you share with this person?	
On a scale from 0 to 10, with 0 meaning “nothing” and 10 meaning “everything,” how much do you know about this person’s life, thoughts, and feelings?	
On a scale from 0 to 10, with 0 meaning “never” and 10 meaning “all the time,” how often does this person physically touch you?	

On a scale from 0 to 10, with 0 meaning “never” and 10 meaning “always,” how much do you take this person’s input when you make a decision?	
On a scale from 0 to 10, with 0 meaning “never” and 10 meaning “always,” how much do you behave like your true self around this person?	
On a scale from 0 to 10, with 0 meaning “not at all” and 10 meaning “completely,” how much do you rely on this person?	
On a scale from 0 to 10, with 0 meaning, “never” and 10 meaning “always,” how much time do you spend thinking about this person?	
On a scale from 0 to 10, with 0 meaning, “never” and 10 meaning “always,” how often do you believe what this person tells you?	
On a scale from 0 to 10, with 0 meaning, “always” and 10 meaning “never,” how often do you wish your relationship with this person were different?	

To score, simply add up all the numbers and write the total here: _____

Write your totals for Section One and Section Two here:

SCORE ON SECTION 1	SCORE ON SECTION 2

Now picture your life as a target, with total intimacy at the center bull’s eye, and no contact at all outside the target. You can place each person’s scores on the rings of the target (pictured below).

For example, if you want to be 100% intimate with your spouse, the “What I Want” score will put her right in the bull’s eye. If you don’t share much information about yourself with your mother, or spend much time with her, your “What I’ve Got” score may put her in a different ring—say the 60-69% range.

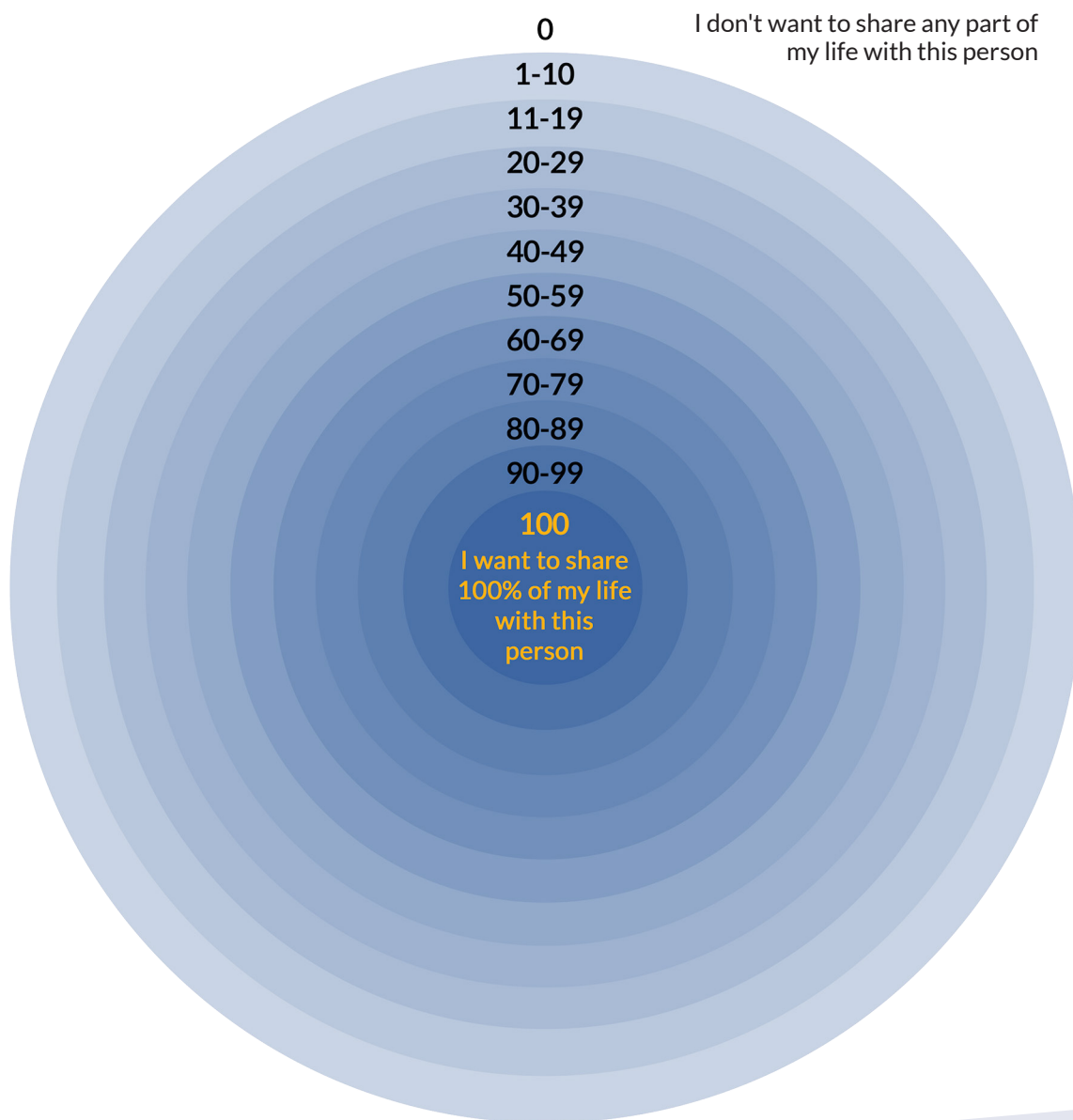
On the other hand, if you don’t trust or enjoy your mother, your “What I Want” score may put her out on the more distant rings of the target. But she may push herself into your life, and you may allow this, so that your “What I’ve Got” score puts her in the bull’s eye.

If the desired score (what you want) and the actual score (what you’ve got) are the same, your level of intimacy with that person is in perfect alignment with your integrity.

If the score on Section One is higher than the score on Section Two, you want more intimacy with this person than you've got. If the score on Section One is lower than the score on Section Two, you have more intimacy than feels right to you.

The solution for either situation is to express your integrity more completely with the person in question. To get more intimacy, you must risk telling the truth by being vulnerable, expressing and asking for what you want. If there's too much intimacy for your liking, you must risk telling the truth by asking for more space and distance between you.

Either action will keep you in your integrity and increase the love and affection you feel for the person in question.



For total integrity, apply this week's "target" analysis work to every single relationship in your life. Whether you create more connection or more distance, following your integrity and telling the absolute truth in all your relationships will increase your love for everyone you know.

Naming Your Fears About Total Integrity in Your Relationships

As you contemplate communicating your whole truth to someone, whether you'll be asking for more intimacy or less, you'll almost certainly feel fear about a possible negative outcome. For example, you may think, "If I tell the absolute truth to Emily, she'll weep and wail and say I don't love her." Or, "If I tell the absolute truth to Bob, he'll sneer and call me stupid."

1. To address your fears about acting with integrity in a given relationship, complete the following sentence:

I'm afraid that if I tell the absolute truth to [name of person], s/he will _____

2. Next, imagine that you spoke honestly to this person and got exactly the reaction you fear most. In your mind, what would that mean? For example, you may think, "If my mother weeps and wails and says I don't love her, it will mean I'm a horrible person." Or, "If Bob laughs at me and calls me stupid, it will mean I'm a total loser."

If [name of person] reacts in the way I fear, it will mean _____

3. Now look at your answer on the question above ("If this person acts the way I fear, it will mean I'm bad/ I'm not loved/ we can't be together/ etc.") and consult your **sense of integrity**. You'll find that fear-based beliefs don't feel true, and beliefs based on truth don't feel fearful, when you're in the space of integrity. In the space below, write a thought that feels more true than your answer to the above question.

Case Study: Rebecca

Rebecca was struggling with the observation that her husband was too enmeshed in the toxic culture of his medical profession to access his own integrity.

I asked Rebecca for a situation where she found her husband's behavior especially difficult. She described a recent incident where her husband chose to work extra shifts rather than come home to celebrate Christmas morning with her and their children.

After some quiet thought, Rebecca remembered that when we're suffering emotionally, it is because we are holding onto a belief that is not true. She identified an issue that seemed to be at the epicenter of her pain: that she and her kids were more important to her husband than his work, but he wasn't acting in a way that supported her belief.

With coaching and connection to her sense of integrity, Rebecca finally saw that when her husband chose to work rather than celebrate with his family, it was not true that his family was more important to him than his work. While this was sad and painful, it was truer than ascribing to him beliefs that he was not demonstrating. Being honest about her husband's real priorities was more in line with Rebecca's integrity.

“The step most people never take is to say, ‘Even my deepest beliefs may not be true, and if they’re not true I want to be shown what is true.’ When we get stuck there, we can stay in suffering for decades. For lifetimes.”

In coming into one's own integrity, one may begin to fit less well with relationships where the other party is out of their own integrity. When we are truly in integrity, we realize we can't control anyone else.

All we can do, to coin a phrase, is, “gently do what's right for you.” Since Rebecca couldn't change her husband's behavior, Rebecca ultimately decided to look for emotional intimacy and companionship from people other than her husband—from friends, counselors, or other family members. This didn't create distance in her marriage—the distance was already there. Instead, it made her more able to accept her husband as he really was, while getting her own needs met so that she could be happy in her marriage.

EXERCISE 2

FEEL FOR A DEEPER TRUTH

Within every painful belief is a lie, and paradoxically, every lie is a kind of passageway to a truth. Find that truth, and it can take you deeper into a place of peaceful, joyful integrity. Any emotional suffering is a signal that you need to examine a false belief and feel for a truer thought. Your **sense of integrity** will tell you which thought is perfectly aligned with your deepest experience, and which thoughts are out of alignment.

Here are some ways to feel for the deep truth under a false or painful belief:

a) Play “warmer, colder”

Consider your painful belief, acknowledge that it may be wrong, and begin searching inside you for changes that would make the statement feel truer. For example, if you’re thinking, “My kids will grow up and leave me forever,” you might find it feels truer to say, “My kids will grow up and find their own way, but they’ll always love me.” Or “My kids will grow up and be even more interesting as adults.” Or, “My kids will grow up and I’ll have the freedom to do anything I want.” See if you can find three changes to your statement that feel more “warm” to your sense of truth.

Original belief:

“Warmer” variation #1:

“Warmer” variation #2:

“Warmer” variation #3:

b) Press the mute button

False beliefs are made of language, even if they’re not clearly articulated in the mind. For example, you may stay in a job that feels wrong to you because of the thought, “This is my only way to get money,” or fail to set boundaries with a loved one because of the thought, “He won’t love me if I say no.” You may not say this in so many words, but your feelings will follow the logic.

To find a deeper truth under such a belief, imagine yourself in the situation, but with the mind of an animal—a cat, a horse, a dog, a bat, whatever you prefer. How would an animal react in this situation, with no language to form fears or biases? What would it feel to have no worried thoughts at all? What might you do if you entered this situation in a wordless state?

Write down at least one action you might take in your troubling situation if you had no language at all—no rules about what you should or should not do, no thoughts about what may or may not happen. Then, consider allowing yourself to feel and act that way.

c) Check the mirror

When we’re very, very attached to false beliefs, it’s often because they’re the truth in disguise. The disguise is a tricky one: very often, the deeper truth is the exact opposite of the false belief.

For example, the deeper truth beneath the thought, “I’m not good enough,” may be “I’m good enough,” or, “I’m more than good enough.” The thought, “He really doesn’t like me,” might actually be a mask for the truth, “I don’t really like him.”

Find a false belief, and look for its mirror image(s). What is the opposite of the thought? There may be a few variations. Test each one against your internal sense of truth, to see if it's truer than the painful belief.

Painful belief:

Mirror opposite statement(s):

d) Stand in for everyone

Write down your painful belief and circle any reference to any person, animal, or group. Then, cross out their names and put yourself there instead.

For example, if you wrote, "My parents should understand me," change it to "I should understand me." If you wrote "I should be nicer to my kids," change it to "I should be nicer to myself." If you wrote, "People shouldn't hurt animals," change it to "I shouldn't hurt me."

Consider ways in which the new sentences might be true. Think of ways you might make the changes you want other people to make.

Painful belief:

Rewrite of painful belief, with myself playing all the parts:

“When you’re in a situation that is causing you psychological suffering, it’s always because your belief system is incongruent with the truth.”

This Week's Challenge

This week, identify one person who’s a bit less close to you than you’d like. Use your sense of integrity to question your fears about being rejected and find thoughts that feel truer.

Then, take a SMALL step to invite more intimacy with that person. Not twenty steps—intimacy should develop by risking a little, checking to see the other person’s reaction, and then making another decision based on what you observe, and what you honestly want to do next.

Next, identify someone who’s a little closer to you than you’d like. Use your sense of integrity to question your fears about setting boundaries and find thoughts that feel truer.

Then take a SMALL step by being brave enough to ask for a little more distance or a change in the other person’s behavior. Again, take this step, then check to see the other person’s response, and then adjust your intimacy goals according to what you’ve learned about yourself, the other person, and the relationship between you.

“Byron Katie talks about having three kinds of business in the world: your business, my business, and God’s business. When we see loved ones breaking their own hearts and we believe we can fix it, we get out of our own business and into theirs. This never works, and then there’s no one home to do the only business we can do: our own.”

UNIT IV

Staying in the TAO

Overview

The word “TAO,” which can be a transliteration of a Chinese word meaning “the Way,” is also an acronym for “Transparent, Authentic, and Open.” You’re staying in the TAO when all your behavior is *transparent* (you aren’t hiding anything, from yourself or anyone else), *authentic* (every action feels right to your true self), and *open* (you never try to control people or their perceptions of you by manipulating, hiding, lying, or “spinning” the truth).

To live this way is to know and be known as your real self, to feel inner harmony, and to love without reservation. In other words, to be at home in the world.

The opposite of TAO behavior is ORC behavior: Opaque, Reactive, and Closed. Every time you hide or suppress your truth, manipulate others and allow their behavior to determine yours, or close yourself off from others, you’re being a bit of an ORC.

For your final unit of the Integrity Cleanse, follow the directions below, using all the tools you’ve learned in this course to dissolve the thoughts that keep you out of the TAO and in the realm of ORCs.

“The basic philosophical premise at the root of everything we’re talking about is ‘the truth sets you free.’”

The Gift of Suffering

Psychological suffering can be your greatest gift. Why? Because this kind of suffering is like a huge red neon sign that says, “What you’re believing is not true.” Now, what you believe might appear *rational* true. Because the mind projects its own meanings onto everything, it can find proof for its own biases in everything. For example, if you really believe that everybody hates you, you will find a way to make it true for you. You’ll imagine hatred when it’s not there, and act in ways that you create it.

When you notice your errors and slips in integrity, one belief at a time, you'll begin to find truer, more integrous ways of thinking. This is like turning the small rudders called "trim tabs" that sit at the back of cruise-ship rudders. The small trim tabs allow the water pressure to turn the massive rudders, and eventually the whole immense ship.

"Eventually, after many seemingly tiny changes, your whole life will turn, like a huge ship steered by little 'trim tab' rudders. And you'll think, 'Wow. I hardly did anything! I was just kind of sitting around telling the truth to myself!'"

Eventually you'll get to the point where you've corrected many of your false beliefs, changed many of your misguided actions, and cleaned up your relationships. At that point, you may realize that by making small changes, you've turned around the whole damn ship of your life. And you'll think, "Wow. I hardly did anything! I was just kind of sitting around telling the truth to myself!"

Integrity is Infectious

As you become completely congruent with your integrity, you become "home" for almost everyone—because everyone, at some level, wants to live in harmony and truth. Integrity is nourishing, magnetic, and infectious.

Based on my own experience, it takes time to trust how good a life of integrity really is. When I began telling people what I really thought, and doing what really felt right to me, many people I hadn't really felt safe with turned out to dislike the changes. But most people were delighted. They listened, changed behaviors that bothered me, and showed up with more love and enthusiasm than ever before.

Your integrity will help you know how to integrate integrity into your life as you become more and more honest. In some situations, you'll feel a strong desire to tell your truth, even if you're afraid not everyone will understand. In others, you'll feel it's in your integrity to remain silent, or even to pull away. Just keep taking small steps, checking with your integrity, and moving forward in the way that feels most in keeping with your heart's desires.

As you do this, your model of the whole world may change. You may find you've been living in a dungeon made of lies and misunderstandings. You'll take that dungeon apart, brick by brick, as your integrity dissolves false beliefs. You'll have new experiences, new ideas, that create a castle where the dungeon once was.

“You’ll take that dungeon apart, brick by brick, as your integrity dissolves false beliefs. Your integrity will create a castle where the dungeon once was.”

Waiting for integrity

When you ask a question of your integrity, you don't need to give a quick answer. If you don't know what's true for you, take some time. Be still for a while. Allow your integrity to speak to you. Make space for your truth to rise up and tell you what it is.

We only get lost in our lies. When we tell the truth, we are found immediately—by our own hearts, by the people around us, by whatever love we allow from the entire universe.

EXERCISE 1

BEGINNING EACH TASK WITH INTEGRITY

Use the worksheet below every morning, to make sure your plans will follow the TAO. If anything on your “To Do” list is ORCish, either modify it or at least observe yourself and be honest about violating your integrity.

The Daily TAO Decision Maker

1. Make a list of things you plan to do today (or this week, or this month).

2. Now mentally go through each item on the list above. Picture actually doing each activity, one by one. As you imagine each activity, notice: Do you feel more calm and relaxed, or tense and troubled? Do you feel the sense of untruth, or integrity?

Calm and relaxed

Tense and troubled

Circle any item above that feels tense and troubled.

3. If you're calm about an item on your list, move on to the next one. If you're tense, there are a few possible reasons:
 - a. You really want or need to do what you're doing, but you're afraid, resistant, or reluctant when you actually set out to do it.
 - b. You don't really want and/or need to do this thing. It is out of your integrity to do it.
 - c. This is something that's in your integrity but it would be better to do it at another time, because something else is calling to you with more urgency.
 - d. This is something that's in your integrity, but it would be better to do it in a different way (for example, in smaller increments, or with help).

Which one of the above options resonates most with you as you consider this item on your To Do list? Whichever one it is, apply your **sense of integrity** in the following ways:

Option A:

If you really want or need to do what you're doing, but you're afraid or reluctant to do it, complete the following sentence. (Example: "I really need to balance my checkbook, but I'm worried that I'll find out I've spent too much.")

I really want and/or need to [do this thing], but I'm worried that:

If your fear came true, what would that mean? (Example: "If I've spent too much, that will mean I'll run out of money and become homeless.") Write your version below.

If [the thing I fear] actually happened, it would mean that:

Now, test the sentence above with your **sense of integrity**. If it doesn't feel true, find a "warmer" thought (remember to try the exact opposite!). Write the truer sentence here:

Option B:

If you don't really want and/or need to do this thing, if it's out of your integrity to do it, complete the following sentence. (Example: "I really don't want to babysit my sister's children, but I'm worried that if I don't, she won't go to rehab.")

I really don't want to [do this thing], and it's out of my integrity. But I'm worried that:

If your fear came true, what would that mean? (Example: "If my sister doesn't get the help she needs, she'll end up a dying on the street.") Write your version below.

If [the thing I fear] actually happened, it would mean that:

Test the sentence above with your **sense of integrity**. If it doesn't feel true, find a "warmer" thought (remember to try the exact opposite!). Write the truer sentence here:

Option C:

If this is something you that's in your integrity, but it would be better to do it at another time, complete the following sentence. (Example: "I would rather go dancing at another time, but I'm worried that if I don't say yes, no one will ever invite me again.")

I would rather do [this thing] at another time, but I'm worried that:

If your fear came true, what would that mean? (Example: "If no one ever asks me to dancing, I'll be a friendless wallflower forever.") Write your version below.

If [the thing I fear] actually happened, it would mean that:

Test the sentence above with your **sense of integrity**. If it doesn't feel true, find a "warmer" thought (remember to try the exact opposite!). Write the truer sentence here:

Option D:

This is something you that's in your integrity, but it would be better to do it in a different way (for example, in smaller increments, or with help), complete the following sentence. (Example: "I'd rather have someone with me when I go for my medical tests, but I'm worried that I'll become a burden on my loved ones.")

I would rather do [this thing] in a different way, but I'm worried that:

If your fear came true, what would that mean? (Example: "If I become a burden on my loved ones, it would mean that I'd ruined their lives.") Write your version below.

If [the thing I fear] actually happened, it would mean that:

Test the sentence above with your **sense of integrity**. If it doesn't feel true, find a "warmer" thought (remember to try the exact opposite!). Write the truer sentence here:

Case Study: Penny

Penny wanted to know how to stay in integrity at all times, even with “all the different hats” she felt she had to wear. In her job as an interior designer, she often felt she had to perform an act to sell her ideas, trying to anticipate her clients' needs, likes, and dislikes when she presented her designs.

First, Penny tested her motives and found they were in integrity—she truly desired to collaborate with her clients to make their space beautiful and personal.

Next, she realized she was “married to manipulation as a way of getting good things to happen.” Little by little, Penny used her sense of integrity to dismantle beliefs like: “If I don’t sell my ideas right no one will see it correctly and I won’t make money.” She gradually relaxed into the understanding that she knew beauty, and that her clients can sense when she’s really excited about a design. The manipulative performance she thought she needed to drum up business was, in fact, unnecessary.

The key to Penny’s session was her realization that she didn’t need to wait until she felt safe to stop her negative behavior (manipulating and overselling). Instead she decided to stop the behavior, and then she notice that she’d been safe to be herself all along.

EXERCISE 2

CREATING REMINDERS TO HELP SUSTAIN INTEGRITY

1. First, create a reminder that will prompt you to check in with yourself several times throughout the day. For example:
 - a. Put post-it note on the bathroom mirror, refrigerator, or car dashboard that says, “Am I in my integrity?”
 - b. Install an app on your cell phone that chimes at random times throughout the day, checking your integrity whenever the chime sounds.
 - c. Tie a string around your finger or a rubber band around your wrist to remind yourself to check in.
 - d. Invent your own reminder device.
 - e. All of the above!
2. Whenever you notice a reminder, take a few seconds to settle into your body. Breathe deeply and slowly, noticing all your physical sensations. Then ask yourself the following questions, and wait for the answers to arise from inside:
 - a. In the last conversation I had, was I absolutely honest? Did I say everything I felt I should say?

Yes No
 - b. The last time I interacted with another person, did I treat them in the way I would want to be treated?

Yes No

c. The last time I said “Yes,” or “No,” was it a “true yes” or “true no”?

Yes No

d. Is the task or activity I’m doing right now totally aligned with my integrity?
Does it feel completely right to me?

Yes No

e. Is this action the one thing I could do right now that’s most deeply aligned with my integrity in this moment?”

Yes No

f. At this moment, am I avoiding or withholding telling the truth in any relationship?

Yes No

3. If you answered “Yes” on every single item above, you are enlightened. You may be excused. :) If you answered “No,” apply the integrity tools you’ve learned in this DIY kit to dissolve the thoughts and fears that are keeping you out of pure integrity. There are two possibilities:

a. You’re trying to do things that aren’t right for you—probably because you’re trying to manipulate reality to get what your ego thinks it wants.

b. You know what’s right for you, but you aren’t doing it—probably because you’re afraid you won’t get what your ego thinks it wants, or that you’ll experience negative consequences you don’t want.

4. Either way, you can use the integrity tools to clear your path so that your thoughts, feelings, words, and actions are all aligned. This state of perfect alignment creates an uninterrupted connection between you and the TAO (God, your higher self, or whatever you want to call it).

- a. In the space below or on a separate paper, write down the fears, assumptions, or other beliefs that are causing you to do things that aren't in your integrity. *Example: I hate my job, but I'm afraid if I quit I'll become a bag lady. I'm also afraid people will think I'm a quitter. I also think that people without jobs are no-good lazy bums.*

- b. In the space below or on a separate paper, write down the fears, assumptions, or other beliefs that are stopping you from doing what feels right to you. *Example: I know I need to schedule a dentist appointment, but I'm afraid it will hurt. I'm also afraid it will be expensive. I also feel that I don't have time.*

- c. Read over your answers above and test them with your **sense of integrity**. In the space below write down thoughts that feel truer, warmer, more liberating and more grounded.

This Week's Challenge

Approaching Impeccability

1. Consciously stay in perfect integrity for one hour, using the integrity tools to dissolve any barriers that arise in your mind. When you've mastered that, go to Step 2.
2. Consciously stay in perfect integrity for four consecutive hours. Then go to Step 3.
3. Stay in perfect integrity for a full waking day. When you can do that, try Step 4.
4. What the heck—go for a week of perfect alignment with the TAO. Once you manage that...
5. Why not a month? Try a month.
6. How about always? Does always work for you?

A Final Word

Moving into integrity is an ongoing process. While it's amazing how fast it begins to clear the suffering out of your life, conditions are always changing. We learn over and over again that integrity is not an object, it's a flow; not a rock, but a river. If you think you're going to grab integrity for all time, right now, and perform flawlessly forever more, you're missing the ongoing variety and play of life.

This happens to me almost every day on my own Integrity Cleanse. I get myself perfectly in integrity, everything clean and sparkling inside me. Then something changes, I find myself off balance and in suffering, and I have to return to the tools I've spelled out in this kit.

That's the process of discovery. That's the process of living life on this particular planet as these points of consciousness. Fun, isn't it? Such an interesting ride we're on.

So remember, these materials you're holding are not designed to be used just once. They're designed to be used over and over and over. Because as you move into purer and purer integrity, your life will keep opening like a rose blooming.

*“As you move into purer and purer integrity,
your life will keep opening like a rose
blooming.”*

As each level opens to deeper levels of integrity, there's more beauty, more joy, more illumination.

Now that you know how, take one small step in the next few minutes that aligns you with your integrity. Check to make sure your choice feels true. If it does take another step. You can move that way through the rest of your life, getting faster and faster, more and more accurate in your choices. With each hour you spend this way, you'll feel more centered, open, loving, sure, and peaceful. You'll be riding the river of life like a sound, stable craft, and the adventure will be more beautiful than you ever thought possible.

Thank you so very much for joining me on this adventure! I wish you much love, joy, and peace as you follow your heart, your dreams, and your integrity into the rest of your life.

Love,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Martha', with a stylized, flowing script.