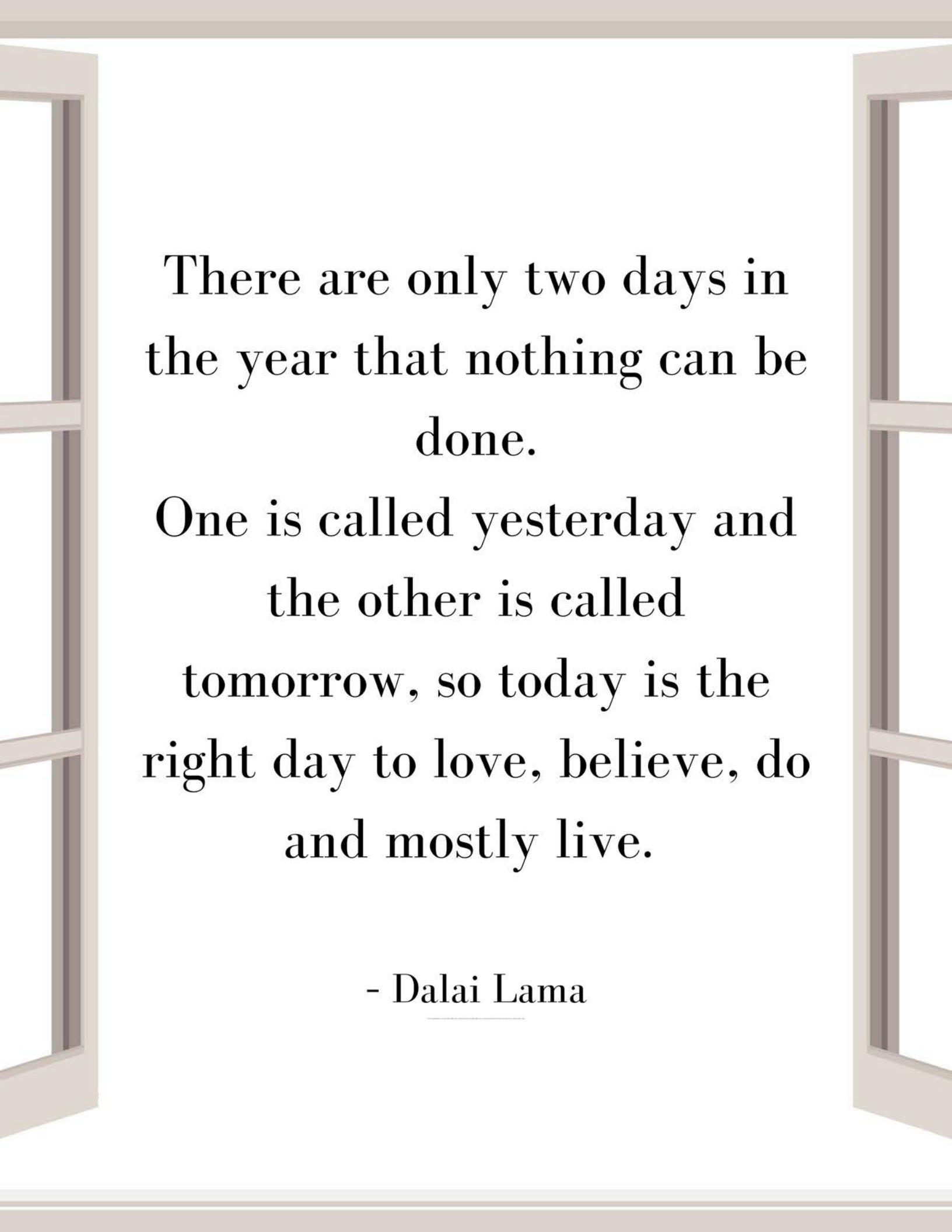




The Modern Creative  
Woman Publishing Co.



# The Modern Creative Woman **Presence**



There are only two days in  
the year that nothing can be  
done.

One is called yesterday and  
the other is called  
tomorrow, so today is the  
right day to love, believe, do  
and mostly live.

- Dalai Lama

# *Presence      Mindset      Purpose*



- Make full contact with the present moment.
- See yourself as the 'context' for all your life experiences.
- Get out of your mind and get into your life.



- Acceptance of your thoughts, feelings, and circumstances as they are, rather than what you think they should be.
- Forging a new working relationship with your thoughts.
- Practicing conscious & creative thinking.



- Your personal values about what is most important to you.
- Daily movement towards your values
- Committed actions in alignment with your values and Modern Creative Why.





# The path to Presence

Presence - your ability to make contact with the present moment, separate from your thoughts and feelings about it. This means observing what is happening outside of you as well as observing your thoughts and feelings in the present moment.

Self as Context - Seeing yourself as the context for your life means you are the anchor. Whatever happens inside of you (thoughts, feelings, bodily sensations) as well as whatever happens outside of you (people, places, circumstances) is separate from your experience as a human being. You might think of your "context" as your spirit, your core self, your essence. In other words, you as the context is the view of yourself as the person experiencing your life. For example: you are the journal on which your story is written. Rather than being the story itself, you are able to truthfully see yourself as the journal on which the story is written. Another example: You are the canvas on which you create the painting of your life. Instead of being the paint, you accurately see yourself as the canvas.

Remember, your presence includes getting out of your mind and getting into your life, making contact with the present moment and seeing yourself as the context for your life experiences. Your internal presence can be whatever you decide it to be in each moment of your life.

# INTENTION

On a scale of 0-10, how present are you? Did you know you can live fully in the present at a 10? Imagine if you were a woman who lived fully in the present, what would be different in your life?

Remember, you can plan for the future and reflect on the past *from the present moment*. Making contact with the present moment means you are present, grounded, engaged and fully embodying your life force energy.

Describe your intention for this workshop...what do you desire from being in the present moment?

THE MODERN CREATIVE  
WOMAN PRACTICE  
PRESENCE

DATE

S M T W T F S

THREE THINGS I AM AWARE OF RIGHT NOW & WHAT I NOTICE ABOUT THEM

1

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2

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3

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GROUNDING IN THE MOMENT: WRITE ONE THING YOU ARE AWARE OF IN EACH AREA

SEE

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HEAR

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SMELL

---

TASTE

---

TOUCH

---

ONE EMOTION I AM AWARE OF  
RIGHT NOW

ONE THOUGHT I AM AWARE OF  
RIGHT NOW

*I am a woman who...*

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PRESENT MOMENT DOODLE

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# Take A Mindful Walk

## **And into Your Life!**

Before you sit down to write, take a little walk - around your house or around the block. Walk slowly and make your intention to be fully in the moment without judging. Count your breaths up to 10 while you walk. When you lose track of counting, start over with 1. Notice whatever is happening outside you. If you judge yourself for losing track of counting your breath, just notice that too.


Now write how you felt being in the present moment while you walked...are you judging yourself for not doing it "right"? Just observe those thoughts and be curious about your thoughts. Remember, you are the person noticing your thoughts.

# REFLECTION

Reflect on your week of presence. What came up for you? Are you comfortable with getting in the present moment or is it an uncomfortable place to be? What are you aware of when you are in the present? Do you feel proud, happy, interested curious, uncertain, embarrassed, uneasy, ashamed, or something else? Be sure to end your reflection with some uplifting sentences about what is possible for you in the coming weeks.





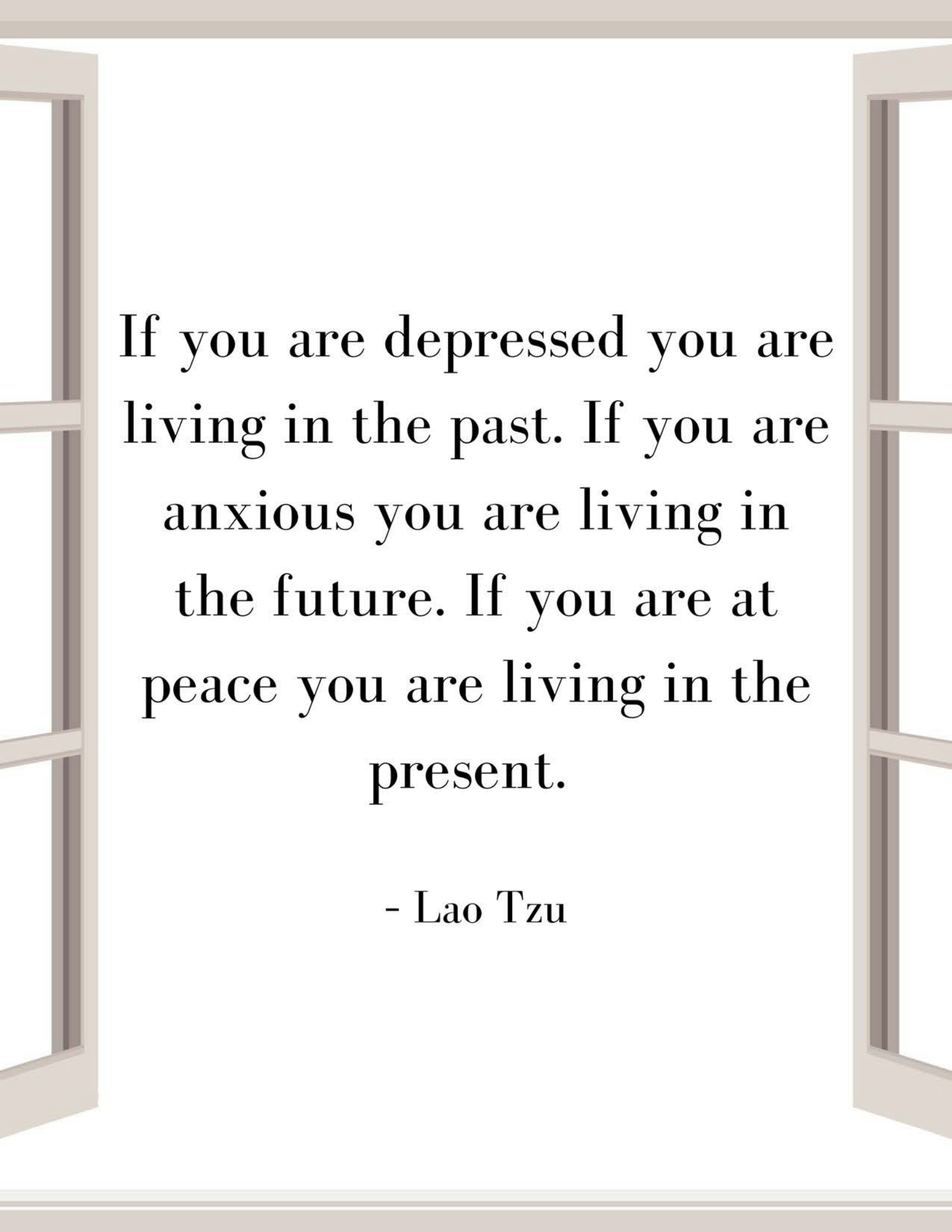
The background image is a Zen garden. It features smooth, light-colored stones placed on a bed of sand that has been raked into concentric, wavy patterns. The lighting is soft and warm, creating a serene and contemplative atmosphere. The title text is overlaid on the right side of the image.

# The Path to Mindset

Acceptance -Acceptance is your ability to see things for what they are. You understand your thoughts as "just thoughts" instead of perceiving your thoughts as "true" or facts. Acceptance is a core concept in changing your self-talk and beliefs about yourself. If you have a negative thought about yourself, it is only a thought. You might be able to find piles of evidence to support your thought, yet a thought is just a thought. It is your brain firing - that is all. Acceptance also helps us be at ease in relationships by not taking things personally. Acceptance means we avoid distorting comments into something negative or personal. This one change in your life can completely transform your relationship with yourself and others.

Relationship to Your Thoughts - Changing your relationship to thoughts frees you from negative self-talk and low self-esteem. Then you can transform your behaviors for health, recovery, and happiness. Your thoughts stem from your brain - not from your essence, spirit or core self. Thoughts are merely a product of your brain. Make your thoughts work for you instead of being swayed by negative thoughts. Start by observing: say "That is just a thought" each time you notice a thought.

Remember, your mindset includes acceptance of what you are currently thinking and feeling as well as the circumstances you are facing. Acceptance is necessary before attempting to make any changes. Mindset also includes forging a new working relationship with your thoughts and practicing conscious & creative thinking.

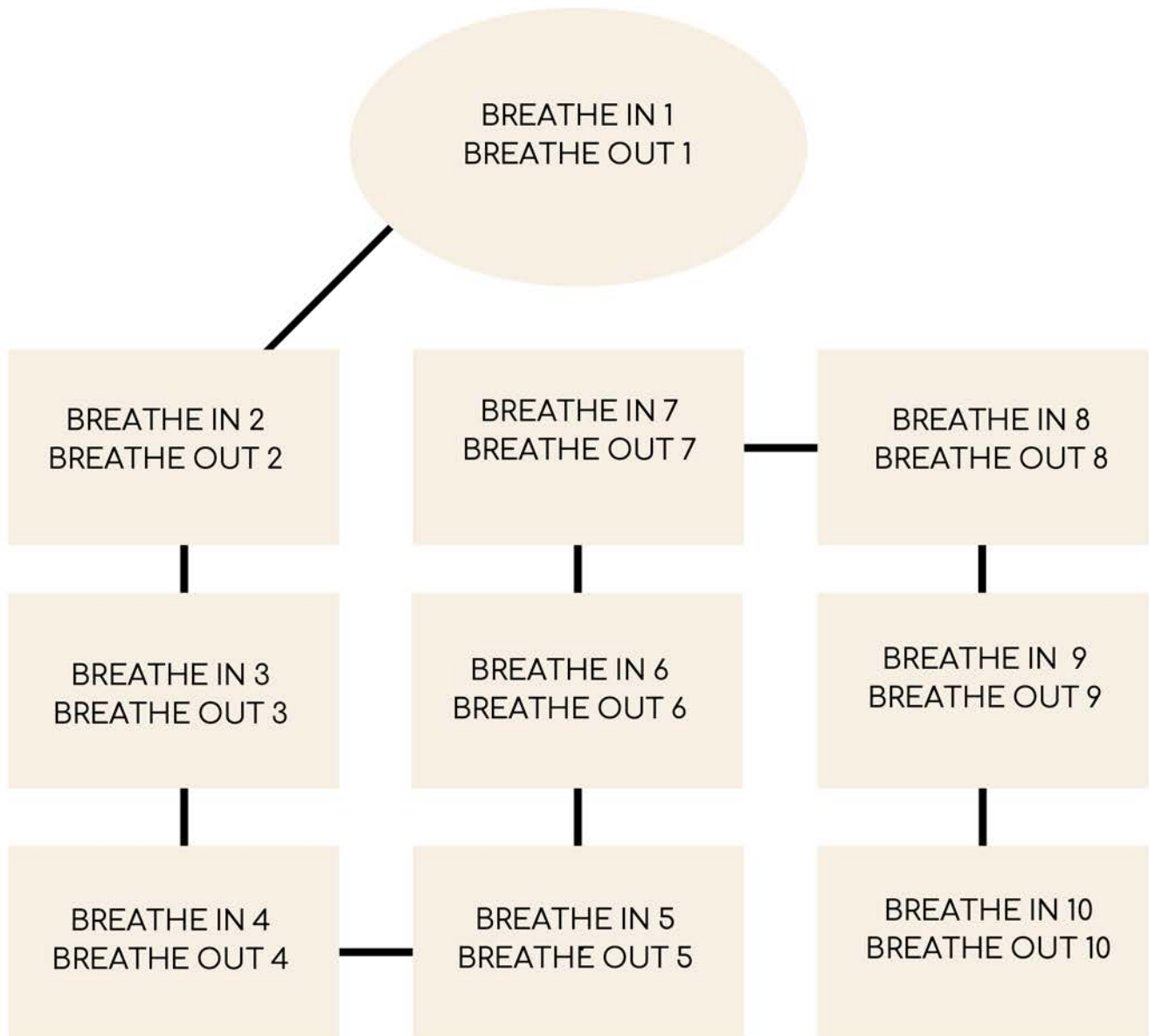


If you are depressed you are  
living in the past. If you are  
anxious you are living in  
the future. If you are at  
peace you are living in the  
present.

- Lao Tzu

# Just Breathe

Breathing consciously is the most powerful tool you have in self regulation. It can help you lower your overall stress levels as well as help you feel better in the moment. It is best to practice when you are at ease. Then later you can use this breathing when you crave a little relaxation. This is a powerful technique blending your breath, voice, sight, and movement. Trace your fingers on the map to keep you on track as you breathe in and out slowly saying the phrases in the boxes below..



## Observations

# Your Unique Breath Map

Create your own unique breath map. Use markers, paints, or collage to create a map with 10 points for each breath. You can create your map however you like - all you need is 10 points to mark each of the 10 breaths and the rest is up to you.

When you have finished, trace your finger over each spot on the map and follow the breathing pattern you learned on the previous page. (Breath in 1, Breath out 1).



# 10 Reasons to Live in the Moment

1. **Reduced Stress and Anxiety:** Living in the present moment allows you to focus on what's happening right now, alleviating concerns about the past or future that often contribute to stress and anxiety.
2. **Increased Mindfulness:** Being present cultivates mindfulness, enabling you to fully engage with your surroundings, emotions, and experiences. This heightened awareness can lead to a deeper appreciation of life.
3. **Enhanced Emotional Well-being:** By staying present, you can better manage your emotions. Acknowledging and experiencing feelings as they arise helps you navigate challenges with greater resilience and emotional intelligence.
4. **Improved Relationships:** Present-moment living fosters better connections with others. Being fully engaged during conversations and activities strengthens relationships, as people feel valued and understood.
5. **Greater Appreciation for Life:** The present moment is where life unfolds. Embracing it allows you to recognize and appreciate the beauty and simplicity of everyday experiences that may be overlooked when preoccupied with the past or future.
6. **Increased Productivity:** Focusing on the present task at hand enhances concentration and efficiency. This can lead to improved productivity as distractions related to past events or future concerns are minimized.
7. **Enhanced Decision-Making:** Clarity in the present moment facilitates better decision-making. By letting go of lingering past regrets or future worries, you can make choices based on the current situation and your authentic desires.
8. **Heightened Physical Well-being:** Being present supports a healthier lifestyle. Whether it's savoring nutritious meals or engaging in mindful physical activities, living in the present moment contributes to overall well-being.
9. **Increased Gratitude:** When you focus on the present, you become more attuned to the positive aspects of your life. This heightened awareness fosters gratitude, promoting a positive mindset and emotional well-being.
10. **Embracing Life's Transience:** Acknowledging the impermanence of life becomes more accessible when living in the present moment. This awareness encourages you to cherish each experience, fostering a deeper sense of fulfillment and contentment.

# Multitasking

Living in the present moment requires you to limit multitasking. This exercise will challenge the habit of multitasking, which can divide your attention and pull you away from the present moment. Instead, you will learn to focus on one task at a time, giving it your full concentration. This not only improves the quality of your work but also fosters a sense of presence and engagement. Look around you and see what you might be doing to multitask. Is your phone out and tempting you? Are you alternating tasks such as work and this workbook?

\*\* There is one time multi-tasking is helpful - when you need cognitive anchoring . For example, using a fidget toy on a zoom call, sitting on an exercise ball at your desk, or doodling in the margins of your paper at a meeting. These little actions that involve movement can give you “cognitive anchoring” (helping you stay focused) when you want to pay attention and are having difficulty.

Write down 5 ways you find yourself multi-tasking where you would like to get more focused. For example: texting while eating, looking at your phone while watching a movie, alternating tasks at work, etc.

Decide where you can make a change in your multi-tasking. Figure out a plan to be in the moment and how you will remember to do one thing at a time. What will you eliminate in multi-tasking?

# REFLECTION

Research shows we are more satisfied with our days when we are making contact with the present moment. Reflect on what you noticed this week about living in the present moment. What will you remember about this week? Avoid judging yourself for what you did or did not do.







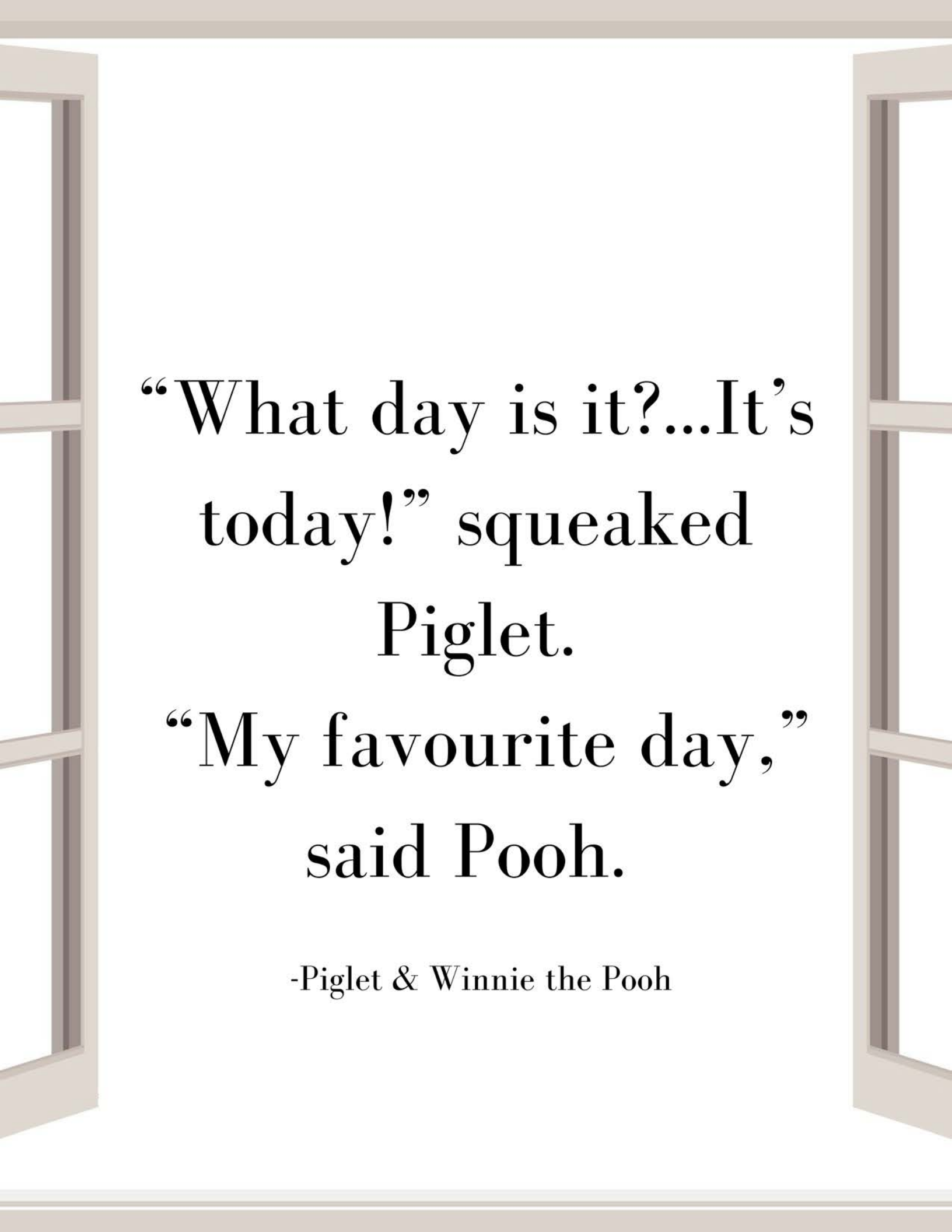
# The Path to Purpose

Your purpose includes both your personal values and the action steps you take in alignment with your values. It is through your purpose that you engage with your life, choose what is most important, and make committed actions to demonstrate your values to yourself and others. Your purpose is something you decide based on what you enjoy, have an interest in pursuing, and have an ability/aptitude for doing.

Values - what you decide is most important to you. You have values such as, health, intimate partner relationship, education, family, friendship, parenting, sports, spirituality, work/vocation, community, creativity, service, school, personal development, hobbies, etc. Your values are what YOU want to bring to each area and has nothing to do with what others are doing or even if they like what you are doing. The goal is to make your decisions and actions based on values instead of feelings or reactions to situations or others.

Committed Actions - how you demonstrate your values through your actions. Your actions directly reflect your values. Committed action is how you show your values to yourself and the world. Notice this is action, not thoughts or beliefs. If you live your values, they will show in your behavior. For example, if you truly believe in your health, then your behavior will show it through healthy food choices, exercise, managing your mind, learning what you need to know, practicing body care, and investing time and money in your health. If you only think or talk about your health, then it is a wish, instead of a value and committed action.





“What day is it?...It’s  
today!” squeaked  
Piglet.

“My favourite day,”  
said Pooh.

-Piglet & Winnie the Pooh

# 3 Ways to Get in the Moment

- 1. Practice Mindful Breathing:** Take a few moments throughout your day to engage in mindful breathing. Focus on each breath, paying attention to the sensation of inhaling and exhaling. This simple practice helps anchor your awareness in the present moment, promoting a sense of calm.
- 2. Use Your Senses:** Engage your senses to bring yourself into the present. Take a moment to observe what you see, hear, smell, taste, and touch. Grounding yourself in your sensory experiences helps shift your focus away from distractions and into the richness of the current moment.
- 3. Cultivate Gratitude:** Regularly express gratitude for the present moment by acknowledging the positive aspects of your life. Whether it's the people around you, the environment, or small moments of joy, consciously recognizing and appreciating these elements helps anchor you in the now.

Pick one of the activities and set your timer for 8 minutes. Practice breathing, using your senses or reflecting on gratitude for the whole 8 minutes. Write and draw your response below.

# Self Awareness

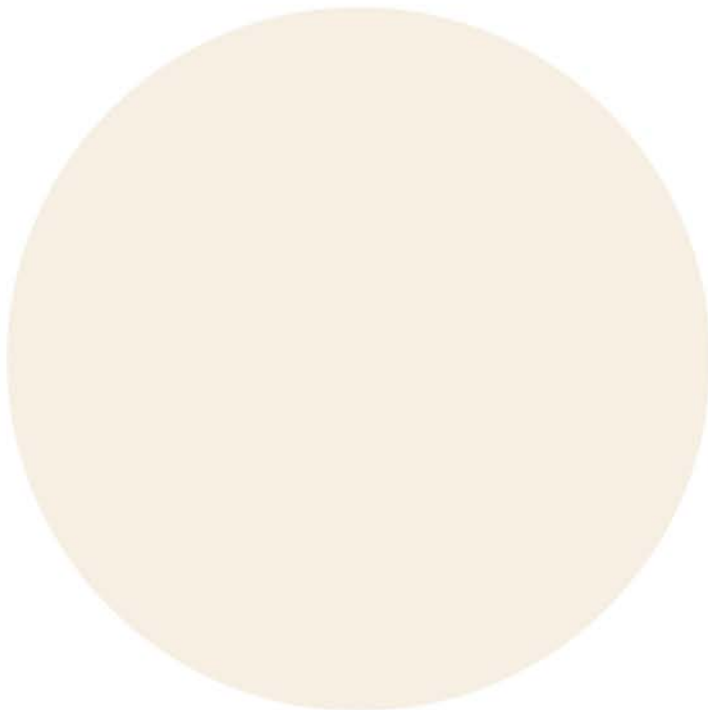
Write your name in the middle of the Mind Map. Set your stop-watch on your phone to see how long this takes you. Sit quietly and focus on your breathing. Each time you have an awareness, write it in one of the circles. For example, a sensation in your body, noticing something in the room, hearing something, a thought about your to-do list, etc. After each one, return to your breathing. Were you surprised at the time it took your brain to become aware of 8 things?



# Your Modern Creative Why

Take a few deep breaths and think about your Modern Creative Why. Reflect on what you value the most, why you do what you do, and what inspires you. Imagine you are fully living your “Why”. What thoughts will you need to think, and what feelings will you need to cultivate to live your why? What would you be doing today if you are living your Why?

Create a simple design inside the circle to reflect on your embodied “Why”. Be spontaneous. Write down three words to describe your design and give it a title.



# REFLECTION

What was it like to make contact with the present moment this month ? What are the surprising benefits you noticed? What challenges did you encounter? What do you know now about the present moment that you did not know before?  
What will you do next? How will you carry present moment awareness forward?







# YOUR CREATIVE INTEGRATION

# Present Moment Awareness

You have completed a month focused on present moment awareness! These exercises hopefully opened you to new ways of focusing and attending to your life.

As Maya Angelou says: "If you must look back, do so forgivingly. If you must look forward, do love prayerfully. However, the wisest thing you can do is be present in the present...Gratefully."

I am delighted you joined this community of Modern Creative Women who are living more compassionately and making the world a better place. Living your values and passions is part of creating a better world. Imagine if everyone lived in the moment!

If you are excited about continuing this work, I would love to support you. Reach out to The Modern Creative Woman for a list of programs, workshops and retreats. For the ultimate creative glow-up, consider a custom-designed VIP package in San Francisco, Paris or online.

It is my pleasure to share the evidence-based information which has helped people all around the world. I look forward to hearing from you about what you learned in this workbook. Please send me a testimonial that I may share with others so they know the benefits of being a Modern Creative Woman.



Amy Backos, PhD, ATR-BC

# *Celebrate Yourself!*



**How I  
increased my  
presence this  
month...**



**How I changed  
my mindset this  
month...**



**How I moved  
towards my  
purpose this  
month...**

*How I will celebrate myself:*

# Resources



## Personal Development

- **Coaching:** Creativity is everything! Focus on developing your creative thinking to excel in your work, love and presence in the world.
- Creativity Intensives online, in San Francisco and Paris.
- Complementary consultations.



## Stay in Touch!

- Instagram @dramybackos
- Join me each Friday at noon PST while I gently guide you to strategies to live a creative and joyful life.
- DM me with questions or topics you want to see covered!



## Learn more!

- **Podcast:** The Modern Creative Woman.
- **Book:** ACT Art Therapy by Dr. Amy Backos
- **Book:** PTSD and Art Therapy by Dr. Amy Backos.
- **Book:** Emerging Perspectives in Art Therapy by Drs. Amy Backos & Richard Carolan







