

Helpful Hints



Intention-setting

Setting an intention can be a powerful way of supporting your daily planning by focusing on how you **want to feel**.

We all experience both pleasant and difficult emotions, often at the same time. That's part of being human. Focusing on a positive emotion we want to feel can help our brains "take the high road," so to speak.

How do you **want** to feel?

Choose one word or maybe two or three. The fewer the words, the more power each word has. Consider writing your intention down somewhere besides your Daily Guide to remind yourself, or keep your Daily Guide close by to help remind yourself what you want to feel and get done! So much happens in a day that can distract us from what we want to get done, aside from how we want to feel. Developing this practice can help you stay focused on what is important to you.

Examples of my own favorites:

energized, calm, inspired, focused, joyful, accepting, grateful, kind, gentle, etc.

Important! This is not about ignoring how you are actually feeling or pretending that you are not feeling something. This is a reminder that we can change how we feel through our thinking and actions. It is not about beating ourselves up for not feeling positive emotions. If you need some self-care, support, or a break, by all means, please take care of yourself!

I would feel good about today if I did nothing else but:

— OR —

What matters most or is most important today?

These are key questions because we generally have a mile-long list, right? The longer the list, the less likely we will be able to get the **one** thing (or the top things) **done** that we really want to get done.

Careful, though, to make sure that whatever you write down is not something like, "Clear out all the clutter in my home"... (Unless you have no issues with clutter!) That is a major project for most of us and takes days.

It's important to break down everything on your list into very specific, clear-cut actions that are doable. If each to-do is not a specific, clear-cut action, your first task is to make a list of the smaller tasks involved. Sometimes the smaller tasks need to be broken down again, until you can breathe a sigh of relief because your brain can wrap around its simplicity, and you can get it **done!**

For more info on creating specific, clear-cut actions that are doable, read the article: "[Motivation for Change: Part 1](#)".

Self-Care (Care of body, mind, or spirit)

Please don't ignore this one. We have often learned how to neglect ourselves and just keep pushing ourselves. That's part of the problem. We are running on empty but still expecting ourselves to keep on keeping on. It's totally understandable for all kinds of reasons, but it is not helpful and, practically, it is not sustainable.

If this is difficult for you, start small with something seemingly insignificant. It's preferable and more effective to write down something easy and doable, rather than something that sounds great but is going to be potentially difficult to follow through with. It might be something as small as "Drink 6-8 glasses of water today." Or "Take a short walk around the block." Or "Call a friend to check-in for support."

Grateful for:

I believe wholeheartedly in practicing gratitude and appreciation — for a dear friend, for a beautiful day, for a walk in nature, for seeing an owl or a beautiful flower, for having a safe home with heating and cooling — for having the resources I do have in my life.

However, perhaps like me, your first experiences with gratitude were tainted by a sense of obligation, laced with "shoulds". Many of us were taught at an early age to say, "thank you" for receiving a gift, then when a bit older to write those "thank-yous" on cards to send — perhaps with reminders from a parent, which made the

thank-you feel less genuine because it began to feel obligatory, instead of having the original appreciation you had.

Writing multiple thank-you cards is one of the projects that those of us with ADHD often struggle with. We often want to write those cards but have difficulty getting started and/or finishing the project, so we procrastinate. Then it becomes harder, and we feel guilty, which only adds to our distress.

I realized this had happened for me in the past, and I wanted a genuine understanding and experience of appreciation and gratitude. It took effort and a lot of awareness, but it was well worth it because gratitude is now something that I practice frequently, and it has become a part of self-care for me. It began with very small things and things that I had come to take for granted (like a bed with a pillow or clean water).

I encourage you to write something down on that line or in that little box. It is not meant to be an inclusive list; it is meant to help you recognize one or two small things that matter. It is a practice of paying attention to what is good in your life on this particular day to support what you want in your life. They're connected!