Evolving and Revolving

A Guide to Self-Awareness and Living Consciously

Marianne Farag, © 2014



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Source of Quotations

Susan Hayward, <u>A Guide for the Advanced Soul</u>. Toronto: Little, Brown And Company, 1984.

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Man cannot discover new oceans

until he has courage

to lose sight

of the shore.

Unknown



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Purpose of the Guide

Self-awareness is a blessing. If we allow it to, it can inform and guide our decisions, choices and actions. As we journey through life, the Self evolves. The Self and one's experience of the Self does not remain static. To periodically take the pulse of our attitudes, thinking and behaviours provides us with an opportunity to gain insight into how we may be changing and more importantly, how we may want to change.

<u>Evolving and Revolving</u> was designed as a guide for those who, at any point in their life, want to take stock. Sometimes a call to take stock is preceded by any one or a combination of such emotions as: feeling at a crossroads, in a slump, confused, stuck, dissatisfied, or restless. It may also be a case of finding yourself wondering if there could be more vitality in your life.

If self-exploration can be experienced as play rather than work, it will yield dividends. Self-exploration should be a process that is experienced as life-affirming not as a chore or a task to get through. To entice the Self to open up to the Self requires creating the right environment - creating the ambiance if you like that will encourage the flow of awareness, insight and ideas. The way in which to get into the right headspace for self-exploration differs for each person. Each has to identify and set the stage for the environment that is conducive to going through the steps in this guide.



How the Guide is Structured

Each of the four parts of this Guide begins with an introduction that provides an orientation on the purpose and intent of that part. Next, you will find steps to follow, and templates to assist you in completing each part.

Part 4 will show you how to bring together what you have uncovered about yourself in the previous three parts. So, as you work through **Parts 1** to **3**, keep in mind that **Part 4** gives you a framework by which to integrate your insights into a plan of action.

Some Recommendations on how to Proceed

Write down your answers so you can revisit them.

Resist the temptation to do all four parts in one or two sessions. Allow at least two weeks between completing one section and the next. Time is needed in order to integrate the new ideas that come to you. Let things settle in your consciousness for a while. Stroll through the process

During the two week time lapse, review what you've written, examining it several times over the course of that period in order to refine the expression of your thoughts/feelings.



Recognize that one's evolution is entirely determined by the extent to which one is willing to let go of long held attitudes and beliefs that may no longer be serving one's purpose. Major change in our life therefore begins with shifts in our perception.

Acknowledging certain truths about our lives sometimes requires courage. So remember to congratulate yourself for your courage as you proceed through the process.

For many of us, our automatic default is to judge ourselves. You will find that the process unfolds more gently and more constructively if you can avoid judging your thoughts, beliefs, attitudes, actions and behaviours. Let them come to you without the encumbrance of labeling them as good or bad.



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Part 1

Sources of your Satisfaction.....

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If pain is repressed it grows; if you manifest it, it diminishes.

With joy it is totally the opposite: if you repress joy it diminishes, if you manifest joy it increases.

Sadhana Sutra



Part 1 invites you to reflect on what makes you happy.

The trick to bringing more satisfaction into our lives starts with awareness of what makes us happy. The more conscious we are of the occurrences that give us a lift, the more we can attract other similar experiences into our life. Equally important is the acknowledgement of these occurrences. Some call that expressing gratitude and making sure that we are not taking for granted the sources of our happiness.

Another vital dimension to the equation is that no gesture or occurrence is too small to be acknowledged as a source of one's contentment.

Experience is determined by yourself - not the circumstances of your life. Gita Belin

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Step 1: Distinguish if pleasure and reward are synonyms or carry different meaning for you. Give some thought as to how each word might evoke a different response or whether for you they are one and the same. There is no right or wrong here, only an invitation to ponder.....

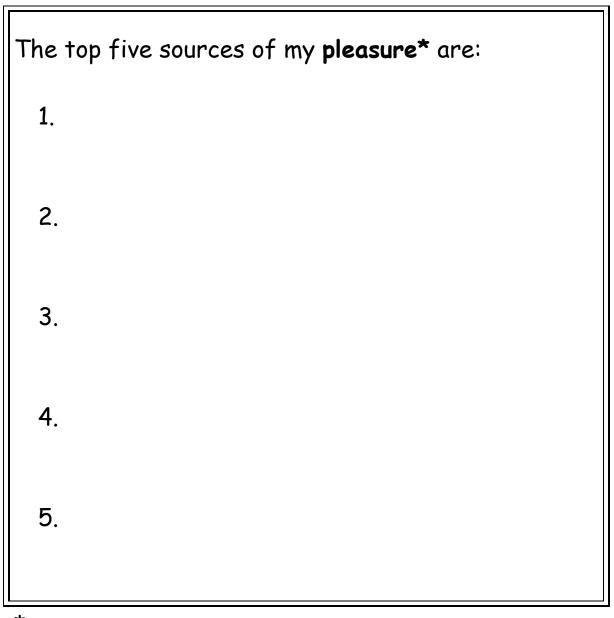
Step 2: Identify and list your sources of pleasure/reward.

Step 3: From the list of pleasures/rewards you have created, determine which ones you would like to take-up or do more of in future - i.e., identify your priorities.

For me, the word **pleasure** conjures up the following.....

For me, the word **rewarding** conjures up the following.....

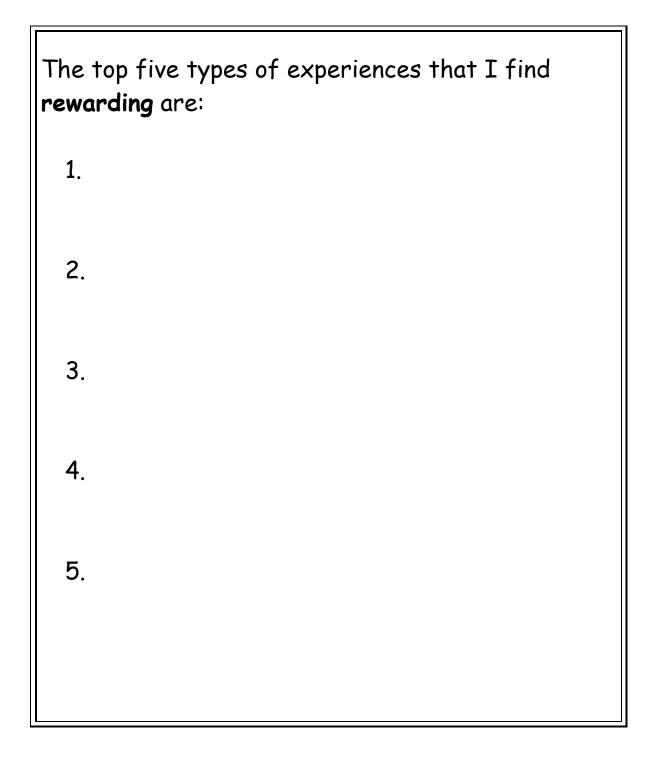




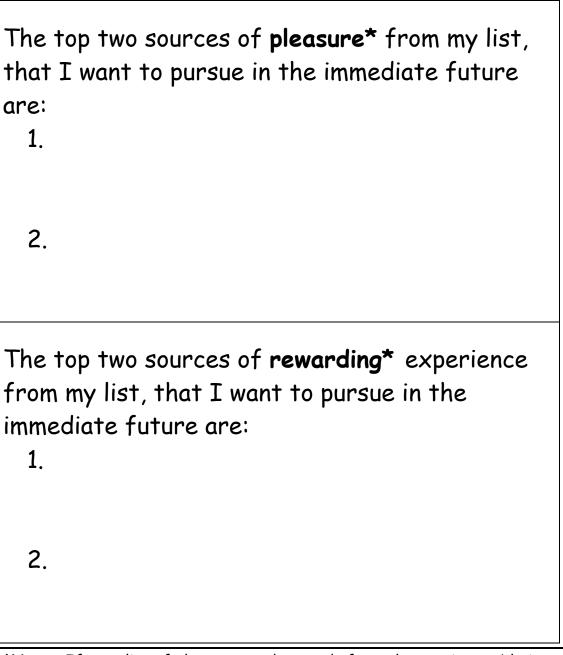
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* If pleasure and reward are synonymous for you, create one list in this section, - i.e., no need to complete the worksheet on "rewards".









*Note: If your list of pleasures and rewards from the previous table is one and the same, then only identify two sources of pleasure/reward.



Part 2

How Your Present Looks.....

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Seek always for the answers within.

Be not influenced by those around you,

by their thoughts or their words.

Eileen Cady



Part 2 will give you a baseline on how you feel about various aspects of your life. A central aspect of living consciously is being aware of how you feel about your current situation. **Part 2** asks you to examine your life in relation to eight dimensions in order to determine what is working for you and what is not.

Step 1: Describe your present situation under each of the eight dimensions identified in the templates and follow the example provided.

Use sentences that start with "I like that" or "I don't like that.....", to characterize how you would describe key aspects of your life under each of the eight dimensions.

Try to be as honest as you can with yourself, in regards to how you **feel**.

Step 2: In the templates provided, explore whether the picture that emerges in each of the eight dimensions satisfies you. Identify aspects of your life that you want to hold onto, ones you may want to release, and new elements you want to add. The more specific you can be, the more helpful this exercise will be for **Part 4**.

Before you get started, see the example that follows which illustrates how to complete **Steps 1** and **2**.

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Example - Your home life

Home Life - The Current Situation

- I like that I now have space in my home to do carpentry.
- I like that I have a vegetable garden.
- I don't like that I mostly feel that when I am at home I am doing chores - even our pets are starting to feel like a chore!
- I like that we finally trained our dog to behave much better at home.
- I don't like that my interaction with my kids is primarily about me driving them here, there, and everywhere.

Aspect I Want to Hold On To

 I want my family to feel they can come to me when they need me and that I am there for them, but in a way that is more manageable/less all consuming for me.

Aspect I Want to Release

 I want to let go of feeling like the live-in servant to my family. I want to give myself permission to say "no" sometimes to family requests. I want to get past the need to be "super-mom". I need to release the idea I have that I will be letting my family down/disappointing them if I say, "I'm too tired", or "I want a night-out", or "how about we divide up the cooking responsibilities", etc.

Aspects I Want to Add

- To feel that it is perfectly acceptable to say, "no", "not now", "not today", i.e., to not feel guilty.
- To feel fine about asking for help from my family in carrying out all that needs to be done to keep our household running - i.e., to stop feeling that I ought to be able to handle it all since I am a stay at home mom.
- To show my children how to be more self-reliant.



<u>Tip</u>: When completing "Aspects I Want to Add" be careful that you stay focused on setting objectives for yourself and watch that you don't veer into identifying changes you want others to make. Remember, you don't control others; you can only change yourself. See the table below for some pointers.

How to State "Aspects You Want to Add"					
(Relates to Pages 20 to 30 of Workbook)					
Focus on Yourself in Stating Changes					
✓ I want to have fewer chores at home.					
✓ I want a job with no out-of-town travel.					
✓ I want to have more time for pleasure reading.					
✓ I want to have better eating habits.					
✓ I want to learn to meditate.					
✓ I want to organize a family reunion.					
\checkmark I want to volunteer with a group that helps new immigrants.					
Avoid Identifying Changes You Want Other People to Make					
X I want my daughter to quit her job to attend university.					
X I want my partner to show me proper appreciation.					
X I want the committee I volunteer with to acknowledge how much effort I put in.					



	1. Home Life
My Current	
Situation	
(I like/Don't Like)	
Aspects I	
Want to Hold	
On To	
(Try to be as specific as possible)	
Aspects I	
Want to	
Release	
(Try to be as specific as possible)	
Aspects I	
Want to Add	
(Try to be as specific as possible)	

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2. Work Life My Current Situation (I like/Don't Like)

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My Current	
Situation	
(I like/Don't Like)	
Aspects I	
Want to Hold	
On To	
(Try to be as specific as possible)	
Aspects I	
Want to	
Release	
(Try to be as specific as possible)	
Aspects I	
Want to Add	
(Try to be as specific as possible)	



3. Free Time My Current Situation (I like/Don't Like) Aspects I Want to Hold On To (Try to be as specific as possible) Aspects I Want to Release (Try to be as specific as possible) Aspects I Want to Add (Try to be as specific as possible)

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4. Physical Care My Current Situation (I like/Don't Like) Aspects I Want to Hold On To (Try to be as specific as possible) Aspects I Want to Release (Try to be as specific as possible) Aspects I Want to Add (Try to be as specific as possible)

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	REVUIVING,		, REVUIVING,		REVUIVING		REVUIVING		, REVUIVING	

	5. Work-Life Balance
My Current	
Situation	
(I like/Don't Like)	
Aspects I	
Want to Hold	
On To	
(Try to be as specific as possible)	
Aspects I	
Want to	
Release	
(Try to be as specific as possible)	
Aspects I	
Want to Add	
(Try to be as specific as possible)	



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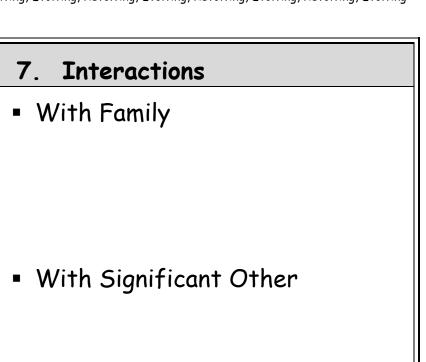
	6.	Spiritual	Life	
My Current				
Situation				
(I like/Don't Like)				
Aspects I				
Want to Hold				
On To				
(Try to be as specific as possible)				
Aspects I				
Want to				
Release				
(Try to be as specific as possible)				
Aspects I				
Want to Add				
(Try to be as specific as possible)				



Interactions 7. My Current With Family Situation (I like/Don't Like) With Significant Other With Friends With Professional Associates/Colleagues

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With Friends

 With Professional Associates/Colleagues

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Aspects I

On To

as possible)

Want to Hold

(Try to be as specific

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7.	Interactions
- W	/ith Family
- W	/ith Significant Other

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Aspects I Want to Release

as possible)

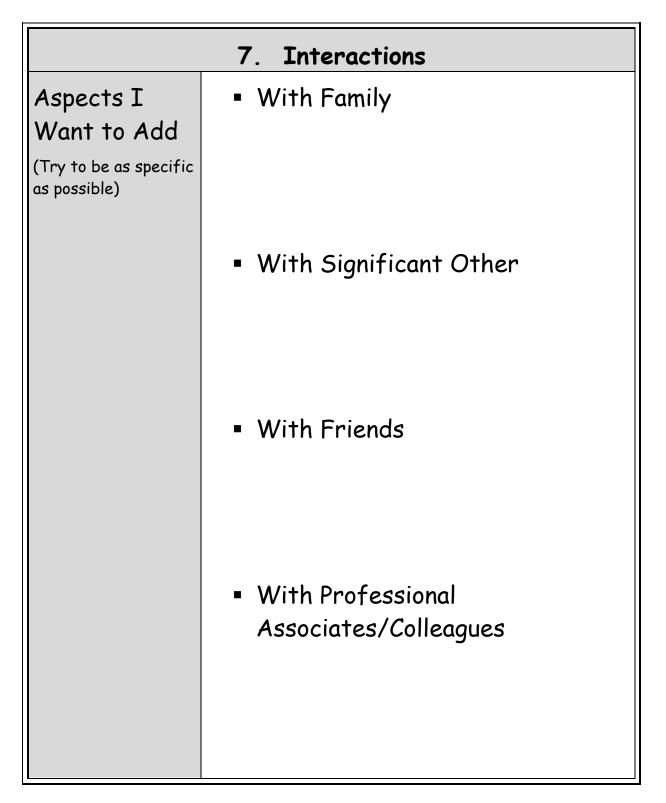
(Try to be as specific

With Friends

 With Professional Associates/Colleagues



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8.	8. Community Life/Volunteering						
My Current							
Situation							
(I like/Don't Like)							
Aspects I							
Want to Hold							
On To							
(Try to be as specific as possible)							
Aspects I							
Want to							
Release							
(Try to be as specific as possible)							
Aspects I							
Want to Add							
(Try to be as specific as possible)							



Part 3

Your Attitudes, Values and Beliefs

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Like attracts like.

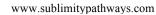
Whatever the conscious mind

thinks and believes,

The subconscious identically creates.

Brian Adams





Part 3 is about getting in touch with your core attitudes, values and beliefs. Our attitudes, values and beliefs shape our life experience, drive what we seek, and govern the extent to which we either feel fulfilled and content or dissatisfied and out of step. A couple of simple examples to illustrate how our preconceived ideas and expectations shape our reality are: whether you view the glass as half full as opposed to half empty; and whether you subscribe to the belief that when you smile, the world smiles with you.

The attitudes, values and beliefs that we subscribe to are the cornerstone or foundation on which we build our life. As we shift our preconceptions, so too does our reality and experience of life alter.

Step 1: Describe your attitude, values and beliefs focusing on what you consider to be fundamental to you in regard to each of the four categories in the templates. Obviously, you may have lots of attitudes, values and beliefs in regard to the four categories listed. Identifying those that you know in your heart are fundamental will help you in Step 2 to deal with the essentials.

The words: attitude, value and belief can be used interchangeably or if they trigger very different responses for you then consider each word in turn separately, whichever approach works best for you to tease out those preconceived assumptions.

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Ask yourself, do your attitudes, values and beliefs work for you in your present life? To help you sift through this question, work through the templates in **Part 3** to identify which attitudes, values and beliefs continue to serve you well, and which ones you'd like to change.

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Step 2: Using the second set of templates provided at the end of Part 3, identify what you perceive to be the gains and losses of taking on new attitudes, values, and beliefs?

> Don't let the pros and cons you identify alter your wish list of changes under **Step 1**. Rather, be sure to address the concerns you have (the cons) when developing your game plan under **Part 4**. More on that when we get to **Part 4**.

Before you get started, see the examples that follow which illustrate how to compete **Steps 1 and 2**.



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Step 1 - Example

	The Self
My Fundamental Attitudes, Values and Beliefs about MY Self	 I believe I am intelligent. I place a lot of importance on politeness and try to always be polite when dealing with others. I believe I am a loyal friend. I believe others don't respect my opinions/advice. Even though my present job is causing me tremendous distress, I believe it would be wrong for me to quit it without first having another one lined up that is going to pay me at least as much if not more. For me, maturity is demonstrated by owning my home, car, etc. Until I feel that my parent(s) are proud of me/accept my
Aspects of Attitudes, Values and Beliefs I Want to Hold on to Because (explain <u>how</u> it serves you - be as clear as possible)	 I believe I am intelligent. <u>Keep</u> because it's a great talent! I believe I am intelligent. <u>Keep</u> because it's a great talent! I place a lot of importance on politeness and try to always be polite when dealing with others. <u>Keep</u> because I pride myself on my courteous manner with people. I believe I am a loyal friend. <u>Keep</u> because I would want the same from my friends! For me maturity is demonstrated by owning my home, car, etc. <u>Keep</u> because that attitude has kept me grounded and responsible - otherwise I'd spend my money on stupid things and not have any savings or anything concrete to show for my money.



Aspects of	 The belief that others don't respect my opinions/advice.
Attitudes,	<u>Release</u> because I don't have proof that I am not respected
Values and	and it makes me feel inferior. The belief that it is wrong to quit a job that I dislike until I
Beliefs I want	have another lined up that is going to pay me at least as much
to Release	if not more. <u>Release</u> because I can't stand my present job
Because (be	and it is starting to affect my mood even when I am not at
as clear as	work - I dwell on all that I dislike about the job. The belief that until I feel that my parent(s) are proud of
possible on how	me/accept my choices, I won't be completely happy. <u>Release</u>
the aspect no	because this attitude makes me feel so needy and I want to
longer serves	live for me/make choices that appeal to me - not ones I think
you)	my parents will approve of.
New Attitude, Value and Belief I Want to Take on (be as specific as possible about the attributes)	 That my opinion/advice matters. It's not immature for me to quit my job before I find another one. That my parents may never be satisfied with me and that's okay!

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Step 2 - Example

Attitudes, Values and Beliefs Regarding	Paint the Picture of the Pros and Cons of taking on the Attitudes, Values and Beliefs you Identified under Step 1
The Self	I Stand to Gain I Stand to Lose Example Quitting the job I dislike before finding another is acceptable to do. I stand to Gain More peace of mind. I will feel like I'm in the driver's seat of my life choices. I'll be a less negative person. Hopefully all my minor physical ailments will subside. Less grouchy with my family. Friends don't have to listen to my endless complaining about my job.
	I stand to Lose It may take a while to find another job. Loss of income while I am looking for work. What if I can't find another job?!



<u>Tip</u>: When completing "New Attitude, Value, and Belief You Want to Take On" be careful that you stay focused on identifying changes for yourself and that you don't veer into identifying changes you want others to make. Remember, you don't control how others see and experience reality but you do have control over your behaviours and responses to life's events. See the table below for some pointers.

How to State "New Attitude, Value, and Belief You Want to Take On" (Relates to Pages 39 to 42 of Workbook)
Focus on Yourself in Stating Attitudes You Want to Take On
 ✓ I want to learn to set boundaries on how many activities/invitations I accept and not feel like I am letting down someone when I say no.
✓ I want to work on being aware of the positives in my life.
 I want to stop getting hooked into responding defensively when someone makes a comment to me that I take as a slight.
✓ I want to not get upset when my sister-in-law is condescending to me.
Avoid Identifying Attitudes You Want Other People to Take On
X I want my children to take my advice and to realize I have much more life experience and therefore can help them avoid making my mistakes.
X I want the work team member who belittles me to stop doing that to me.
X I want my sister-in law to be more pleasant at family gatherings.
X I want my friend to understand that she has betrayed me.

X I want my brother to forgive me for what I did.



The Self 1. My Fundamental Attitudes, Values and Beliefs about MY Self Aspects of Attitudes, Values and Beliefs I Want to Hold on to Because...... (explain how it serves you - be as clear as possible) Aspects of Attitudes, Values and Beliefs I want to Release Because..... (be as clear as possible on how the aspect no longer serves you) New Attitudes, Values and Beliefs I Want to Take on (be as specific as possible about the attributes)

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	2. The Value of Work Life
My Fundamental Attitudes, Values and Beliefs about the Value of Work Life	
Aspects of Attitudes, Values and Beliefs I Want to Hold on to Because (explain <u>how</u> it serves you - be as clear as possible)	
Aspects of Attitudes, Values and Beliefs I want to Release Because (be as clear as possible on how the aspect no longer serves you)	
New Attitudes, Values and Beliefs I Want to Take on (be as specific as possible about the attributes)	



My Role/Purpose in Life 3. My Fundamental Attitudes, Values and Beliefs about My Role/Purpose Aspects of Attitudes, Values and Beliefs I Want to Hold on to Because...... (explain how it serves you be as clear as possible) Aspects of Attitudes, Values and Beliefs I want to Release Because..... (be as clear as possible on how the aspect no longer serves you) New Attitudes, Values and Beliefs I Want to Take on (be as specific as possible about the attributes)

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	4. The Value of Non-Work Life
My Fundamental Attitudes, Values and Beliefs about Non-Work Life	
Aspects of Attitudes, Values and Beliefs I Want to Hold on to Because (explain <u>how</u> it serves you - be as clear as possible) Aspects of Attitudes, Values and Beliefs I want to Release Because (be as clear as possible on how the aspect no longer serves you)	
New Attitudes, Values and Beliefs I Want to Take on (be as specific as possible about the attributes)	



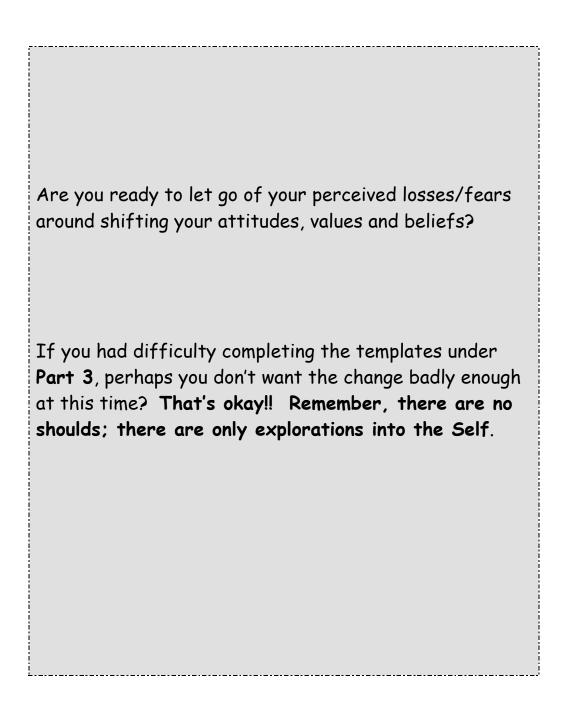
Attitudes, Values and Beliefs Regarding	Paint the Picture of the Pros and Cons of taking on the Attitudes, Values and Beliefs you Identified under Step 1
The Self	I Stand to Gain
	I Stand to Lose
The Value of Work Life	I Stand to Gain
	I Stand to Lose



Attitudes, Values and Beliefs Regarding	Paint the Picture of the Pros and Cons of taking on the Attitudes, Values and Beliefs you Identified under Step 1
My Role/Purpose in Life	I Stand to Gain I Stand to Lose
	1 Stand to Lose
The Value of Non- Work Life	I Stand to Gain
	I Stand to Lose



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Part 4

Moving Towards the Changes you Want.....





It is good to have an end

to journey towards,

but it is the journey that matters, in the end.

Ursula Le Guin

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Part 4 is designed to help you integrate **Parts 1** to **3** into a plan of action.

- Step 1: Select one or two changes you identified from your completed templates under <u>each</u> of the first three parts (i.e., a maximum of six aspects in total) <u>that you can get excited</u> <u>about</u>. These should be aspects that leave you feeling invigorated when you contemplate putting them into action. They should be aspects that you feel will be effortless by virtue of the fact that you are so keen to get going on them. These aspects would be ones that you are convinced will make an appreciable difference in your life once implemented.
- **Step 2**: Brainstorm using the templates provided to come up with ideas on how to proceed. Use the following set of questions to guide you in giving shape to your game plan:

<u>Who</u> might be able to help you realize the changes/activities you want to implement? Who do you think could assist you to address any of the "cons" you identified in **Part 3**?

<u>What</u> exactly do you need to do? What steps can be taken to address any "cons" you identified in **Part 3**?

<u>When</u> do you plan to get started and how long do you think it will take to implement?

<u>The Impact</u> of implementing the change will be? How will you know - i.e., what will be your target, clues/signs that you're getting there?



Before you get started, see the example that follows which illustrates how to complete **Steps 1** and **2**.

Changes That Excite	How To Make Them Happen
From Part 1- Sources of your Satisfaction	Brainstorm Ideas
 Source of Pleasure - downhill skiing. 	 Who: There are a couple of friends who may be willing to join me for a downhill skiing trip. What:
 I used to do much more skiing and now some years I don't go or I go once in a winter. 	 I need to talk to each of these friends to determine which one would be willing to join me. I need to consider other ways of motivating myself to make it happen if neither friend is willing - e.g., explore a bus tour option.
	 When: I need to have that conversation before winter comes so we line up where we'll go and make the necessary bookings before it is too late and options diminish. Impact: Ideally, two ski trips per year, but even one would be great!

Steps 1 & 2 - Example



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<u>Tip</u>: To help get you started on "who" you can turn to for assistance and ideas on how to implement the changes you identified in **Parts 1** to **3**, see the table below.

	Some Suggestions to Help You with the "Who"
	(Relates to Pages 51 to 56 of Workbook)
✓	Engage in some self-help/information gathering by reading on the subject of the change you desire through library, internet or book store resources.
✓	Seek guidance from specialists - e.g., counselor or other type of therapist, family doctor, spiritual advisor etc.
✓	Consult a trusted family member, friend, and/or colleague.
~	Look to someone who you know and consider a good role model for the change you want to make in your life whether it relates to an activity, a behavior or an attitude. Ask them how they do it; determine if they would like to coach you with the change in question.
✓	Explore participating in a support group that can help you with a given change you want to pursue.
~	Explore the idea of joining a club that relates to a given activity you want to take-up.



hanges That Excite	How To Make Them Happen
From Part 1 – Sources of your Satisfaction	Brainstorm Ideas
	<u>Who:</u>
	<u>What:</u>
	<u>When:</u>

Evolving, Revolving, Evolving, Revolving, Re

Impact:



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Changes That Excite	How To Make Them Happen
From Part 1 – Sources of your Satisfaction	Brainstorm Ideas
	<u>Who:</u>
	<u>What:</u>
	When:
	<u>Impact:</u>



Changes That Excite	How To Make Them Happen
From Part 2 - How your Present Looks	Brainstorm Ideas
	<u>Who:</u>
	<u>What:</u>
	<u>When:</u>
	<u>Impact:</u>



Changes That Excite	How To Make Them Happen
From Part 2 - How your Present Looks	Brainstorm Ideas
	<u>Who:</u>
	What:
	<u>When:</u>
	Impact:
	<u></u>



Changes That Excite	How To Make Them Happen
From Part 3 – Your Attitudes, Values & Beliefs	Brainstorm Ideas
	<u>Who:</u>
	<u>What:</u>
	<u>When:</u>
	<u>Impact:</u>



Changes That Excite	How To Make Them Happen
From Part 3 – Your Attitudes, Values & Beliefs	Brainstorm Ideas
	<u>Who:</u>
	<u>What:</u>
	<u>When:</u>
	<u>Impact:</u>



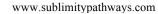
Step 3: For the other changes you identified in Parts 1 to 3, determine which ones you want to hold onto for future action. Those are changes that you don't want to lose sight of although you may not be prepared to move on them at this time for whatever reason. Here again, select only those changes that appeal to you - if you feel that any given change is going to be experienced as work, that's a sign that you are not ready to embrace it. In the space below, list the changes you want to consider for the future. When you are ready to move on them, use Steps 1 and 2 of Part 4 to help you work your way through them.

List of Potential Changes For Future Consideration......



Closing Word.....





Learn to be silent.

Let your quiet mind

listen and absorb.

Pythagoras



Acknowledging Your Progress

- Monitor your progress. Watch that you are not censoring it!!
- Praise yourself and acknowledge even what you consider to be small gains.
- Recognize what you perceive as "setbacks" or lapsing into "old" thinking/ways of behaving by praising your self-awareness of what is going on!!
- In the pages that follow, I encourage you to keep a diary on:
 - Đ how you feel you are doing,
 - Đ ideas that come to you about what next,
 - **Đ** little inspirations,
 - **Ð** breakthroughs, and
 - € EVOLUTIONS, REVOLUTIONS!!!!

Remember: always stroll through your journey, drinking in all you experience.





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