



Wake Up Recovery

with Sherry Gaba, LCSW



Module Five:

Living a Life of Authenticity

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Authenticity is about being honest, especially with yourself, in everything you think, say, and do. When you are living authentically, the energy of who you are on the inside will be expressed on the outside. Behaving in an authentic manner is the only way for your true self to emerge. Living a life of authenticity may not be an easy space to move into. You must remember that if you don't live a life of authenticity, the cost to your life, mind, and body will be very high. If you choose to live a life of authenticity, the benefits are massive and priceless.



Activity #1:

Journaling: Journaling is more than keeping a diary; it is a way of exploring the ideas in your conscious and subconscious mind. It can bring into focus your hopes and fears. This is a great way to work through your problems and find your solutions. Journaling is a tool to help you discover the wisdom that is already within you. After reviewing this activity, I encourage you to go out and buy a notebook, or pull an empty notebook from your shelf, and use this book only for journaling. Set aside 10-15 minutes at the beginning or end of each day (or try both!) to write in your journal. Be sure to put a date at the top of the page. For the sake of this exercise, simply open up a Word doc and we are going to spend the next 10 minutes journaling.

Start with typing or writing, if you have a piece of paper close to you, today's date at the top of your page. The focus for this exercise is to just write. If you are familiar with *The Artist's Way* by Julia Cameron, she stresses that what you write is not as important as getting the words on paper. For the next 10 minutes just write. What's the first thing that comes to your mind? Don't take time to pause and reflect, just write quickly and do not edit. The key to journaling is to silence your internal editor. You cannot do anything wrong and you can throw typos and grammar out the window. Embrace your typos!

Keep writing. What are you feeling right now? Excited? Overwhelmed? Bored? Even if you fill your page with "I don't know what to write" over and over, it's okay! Remember that we are just writing. Go with the flow.



My Notes:



Activity #2:

Meditation & A Soulful Journey

We are going to begin the process of uncovering your authentic self. I encourage you to take time to go through each of these exercises during your down time. This will help you to demonstrate to your clients or yourself that journaling exercises require stillness, patience, and quiet.

Let's take 10 minutes and begin this process. Let's take three deep breaths. Breathing is so important. Take three deep full breaths, in through your nose, deep down into your belly, and out through your mouth. As you breathe, notice your thoughts, but don't resist or try to censor any of them. Notice that they are only thoughts and do not need to be judged or acted upon. Just accept them for what they are – thoughts coming and going, nothing more.

Now, imagine yourself one year from now. Notice the atmosphere, whether you are alone or with someone else, the colors that surround you, the sky, and the ground beneath you, what you are wearing, what you are experiencing with all of your senses. When you imagine yourself this way, try to really see who you are. Remind yourself that we are only taking a brief glance today, but promise yourself that you will return to visit this place when you have more time.

With your eyes closed, breathe in the following questions and breathe out the answers.

- Am I doing what I need to do in most situations, despite my fears?
- Am I aware of my innermost thoughts and feelings?
- Am I aware of the filters that hide who I really am?
- Do I communicate honestly with myself and others or am I in denial?
- Is my behavior aligned with my purpose?
- Do my boundaries align with my true self?
- Do I allow my spiritual nature to unfold in my daily living?

Create in your mind the kind of authenticity that would serve you best. Embody that vision of yourself and trust that this part of you is always there to access. The universe is ready to unleash your true and authentic self.

Let's take three more deep breaths. Slowly open your eyes and bring yourself back to the present. Congratulations!



My Notes:



Activity #3:

This exercise is centered around the law of attraction. Remember how we said that the energy we put into the universe does indeed return to us. It's time to attract from the universe everything that you are and everything that you are becoming. We are going to do this through more daily affirmations.

Affirmations are so important. We continue to talk about affirmations as a fantastic tool and one healthy habit that you incorporate into each day. It's important to repeat these affirmations so that you embody and trust their messages. You can even put them on sticky notes around the house, in your car, your office, and any place that you see them every day. A great tip is to make your screensaver a positive affirmation or the wallpaper on your phone can be a positive affirmation. We all have busy days, so you can make a calendar reminder with yourself, to repeat your daily affirmations. When you see the affirmation on the notes, read them to yourself consciously and with awareness, even if you know them by heart.

Here are some possibilities:

- I am an authentic person and live my life in truth.
- I live my life by my belief system and the values that correspond with my beliefs.
- I trust the universal energy I put forth in my life.
- I love the person I am and who I am becoming.
- I do not live in denial but accept that I am on a journey of discovery.
- My identity is much more than the roles I play.



My Notes:



Module Five Affirmations & Meditation:

Affirmation:

- I no longer hide under a mask of false self-images, but embrace my true self.

Meditation:

Just breathe.

Find a comfortable and quiet place to take 10 minutes to only focus on breathing. Wear comfortable clothes and determine what position is the most ideal. For some, it could be sitting on the floor, for others it could be sitting on a chair or stretched out in your bed. The place and position aren't as important, they just need to be comfortable and ideal for you.

Once you have chosen your posture, close your eyes and spend some time relaxing any tension that may be present, while breathing through your nose. This time spent observing and letting go of tension and relaxing aids the mind into practicing mindfulness as well as builds focus to be used for concentration. When the mind has stilled and settled, start focusing on a point around the head where the breath is most visible. It might be the lip, the nose tip, or the inner nose airways.

Keep a consistent focus on that one point. It is a recommended practice to count the breaths with each in and out breathing movement counting as 1, or if concentration is weak, the in-breath as 1, the out-breath as 2, while keeping counts up to 10 and then restarting.

This is a simple way to learn how to still your mind, body, and thoughts. Soon, this will become second nature. This is a great way to center and ground yourself during stressful moments, before stressful moments, during times of reflection, before you start your day, or when you want to relax and unwind after a long day. Breath is life.