

TENTH ANNIVERSARY EDITION—UPDATED WITH NEW MATERIAL

#1
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“This is the rare book that will make you both smile and think—often on the same page.” —Daniel H. Pink, author of *When*

THE HAPPINESS PROJECT

Or, Why I Spent a Year Trying to
Sing in the Morning, Clean My Closets,
Fight Right, Read Aristotle,
and Generally Have More Fun



**G R E T C H E N
R U B I N**



Workbook

Name: _____

SEVEN STRATEGIES TO HELP FIND HAPPINESS

1. **Happiness Requires Conscious Effort and a Systematic Approach:** Rubin emphasizes that happiness isn't a passive state but requires deliberate actions and consistent reflection. By setting concrete goals and tracking progress, individuals can make sustainable improvements in their happiness levels.
2. **Energy and Order Are Foundational to Happiness:** Maintaining physical vitality through adequate sleep, regular exercise, and a healthy diet is crucial. Additionally, organizing one's physical environment can lead to mental clarity and reduced stress, as "outer order contributes to inner calm."
3. **Nurture Relationships to Boost Happiness:** Investing time and effort into relationships with family and friends enhances happiness. Acts of kindness, active listening, and expressing gratitude strengthen bonds and create a supportive social network.
4. **Find Joy in Work and Pursue Passions:** Engaging in meaningful work and hobbies brings satisfaction. Embracing challenges, setting ambitious goals, and dedicating time to personal interests contribute to a fulfilling life.
5. **Practice Mindfulness and Gratitude:** Being present in the moment and regularly acknowledging positive aspects of life fosters contentment. Mindfulness techniques and gratitude practices help shift focus from negative thoughts to appreciation of everyday joys.
6. **Cultivate a Positive Attitude and Good Manners:** Adopting a cheerful demeanor and practicing politeness can improve interactions and personal outlook. Small gestures, like smiling and expressing appreciation, can have a significant impact on one's mood and relationships.
7. **Money Can Contribute to Happiness When Spent Wisely:** While money alone doesn't guarantee happiness, thoughtful spending on experiences, modest indulgences, and necessary items that enhance daily life can provide joy and satisfaction.

STRATEGY 1- Happiness Requires Conscious Effort and a Systematic Approach:

Happiness isn't a passive state but requires deliberate actions and consistent reflection. By setting concrete goals and tracking progress, individuals can make sustainable improvements in their happiness levels.

- Rate your current happiness level (1-10) in these areas:

Physical Health & Energy

Home Organization

- Relationships
- Work Satisfaction
- Personal Interests
- Mindfulness Practice
- Social Interactions
- Financial Well-being

Detailed Life Areas Assessment

For each category, describe:

- Current situation
- Desired outcome
- Gap analysis
 - The current state - Where you are right now.
 - The desired/future state - Where you want/need/expect to be.
 - The gap between the two - The discrepancy between the current and future state.
- Potential obstacles
- Available resources
- Support system

Vision Setting	Include specific outcomes for:
3-month vision 6-month vision 1-year vision	Personal development Professional growth Relationship goals Health objectives Living environment Financial targets

STRATEGY 2- Energy and Order Are Foundational to Happiness:

Maintaining physical vitality through adequate sleep, regular exercise, and a healthy diet is crucial. Additionally, organizing one's physical environment can lead to mental clarity and reduced stress, as "outer order contributes to inner calm."

Month 1: Energy & Vitality

Physical Vitality Tracker (Weekly) "Rule of Eight"

- Sleep Hours: _____ (7 hours is the new 8 and try the 10 - 3 - 2 - 1 - 0 strategy)
- Exercise Minutes: _____ (150 minutes/week of moderate exercise is a good baseline)
- Healthy Meals: _____ (You are what you eat...)

Weekly Sleep Log:

Day	Hours	Quality (1-5)	Notes
Mon			
[Continue for all days]			

Exercise Tracker:

- Type of activity
- Duration
- Intensity level
- Energy level before/after
- Mood impact

Nutrition Journal:

- Meal planning
- Water intake
- Energy levels
- Food-mood correlation

Month 2: Home & Organization

Space Assessment:

- Room-by-room evaluation
- Clutter hotspots

- Organization needs
- Daily maintenance plan

Decluttering Challenge:

Declutter Your Environment, Declutter Your Mind...

The act of organizing your space can also provide a sense of control and order, which can alleviate feelings of stress and promote a sense of well-being. The mental rejuvenation that comes from decluttering is clear evidence of the link between our physical surroundings and cognitive function.

Decluttering Challenge- One Room At A Time:

Choose one space to organize _____

List 3 items to remove/relocate:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

STRATEGY 3- Nurture Relationships to Boost Happiness:

Investing time and effort into relationships with family and friends enhances happiness. Acts of kindness, active listening, and expressing gratitude strengthen bonds and create a supportive social network.

Connection Inventory:

- Key relationships
- Quality time spent
- Communication patterns
- Areas for improvement

Weekly Connection Planner:

- Family member to focus on: _____
- Friend to reconnect with: _____

- Acts of kindness planned:

Suggested Weekly Connection Planner:

Person	Activity	Duration	Quality (1-5)
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STRATEGY 4- Find Joy in Work and Pursue Passions:

Engaging in meaningful work and hobbies brings satisfaction. Embracing challenges, setting ambitious goals, and dedicating time to personal interests contribute to a fulfilling life.

Career Satisfaction Analysis:

- Current role evaluation
- Skills assessment
- Growth opportunities
- Life balance- how does work, rest, and play balance when juxtapositioned alongside your values, beliefs, and perspectives?

Work and Passion Projects

Career Goals:

Short-term (3 months):

Long-term (1 year):

Personal Interests:

List 3 hobbies you'd like to advance or pursue:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

Development Planning:

Short-term goals - Long-term aspirations - Required skills - Action steps

STRATEGY 5- Practice Mindfulness and Gratitude:

Being present in the moment and regularly acknowledging positive aspects of life fosters contentment. Mindfulness techniques and gratitude practices help shift focus from negative thoughts to appreciation of everyday joys.

Mindfulness Journal

Daily Reflection Journal

Morning Pages:	Evening Review:
<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Intentions● Gratitude● Focus areas	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Accomplishments● Learnings● Tomorrow's preparation

Daily Reflection Example Format (5 minutes):

- Today I felt grateful for:

- One positive moment was:

- Tomorrow I look forward to:

Gratitude Exercise:

List 3 people you're grateful for and why:

1. _____

2.

3.

STRATEGY 6: Cultivate a Positive Attitude and Good Manners:

Adopting a cheerful demeanor and practicing politeness can improve interactions and personal outlook. Small gestures, like smiling and expressing appreciation, can have a significant impact on one's mood and relationships.

The “fly-by complement” can be fun:) People don’t seem to know how to give, and receive, compliments these days. When you go out of your way to offer a kind word to others, even, (and especially), for those you don’t know, it boosts their day (they’re not experiencing this sort of “noticing” by default) and it boosts yours too because the reaction is typically very positive.

Weekly Manner Monitor:

Record/reflect on instances of:

- Smiling at others
- Saying "thank you", even if they didn't do anything special, even just following a conversation
- Offering help

STRATEGY 7- Money Can Contribute to Happiness When Spent Wisely:

While money alone doesn't guarantee happiness, thoughtful spending on experiences, modest indulgences, and necessary items that enhance daily life can provide joy and satisfaction.

Monthly Joy Budget:

- Experiences to save for: \$ _____
- Small indulgences: \$ _____

TOOLS AND RESOURCES for TRACKING, REFLECTING AND EVALUATING

Strategic tracking suggestions/tools for reflecting and evaluating are included below:

“Book-End” Strategy Example:

Morning Routine Designer Time Activity Purpose 6:00 [Continue for morning hours]	Evening Routine Template Time Activity Wind-down purpose 9:00 [Continue for evening hours]
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Weekly Progress Tracker- Journal format

Goals Progress:

- Physical health
- Mental wellbeing
- Relationships
- Career
- Personal growth

Habits Tracker:

Habit:	M	T	W	T	F	S	S

Are there habits you can “stack” to already established habitual routines or practices?

Habit stacking is a technique where you build new habits by attaching them to existing routines, leveraging the brain's natural tendency to form connections between actions.

Suggested Weekly Review Questions:

1. What went well?
2. What challenges arose?
3. What did I learn?
4. What needs adjustment?
5. Next week's focus?

What it is:

Combining Habits:

Habit stacking involves identifying a current, consistent habit and then adding a new, desired habit to that routine.

Brain's Advantage:

By piggybacking a new habit onto an existing one, you use the brain's existing neural pathways, making it easier to establish the new behavior.

Examples:

If you have a habit of brushing your teeth, you could stack a new habit of drinking a glass of water immediately after.

Technique:

The key is to create a clear "if...then" structure: "After [existing habit], I will do [new habit]".

Benefits of Habit Stacking:**Easier Habit Formation:**

Habit stacking simplifies the process of creating new routines, as you don't have to rely solely on motivation or willpower.

Consistency:

By attaching new habits to existing ones, you increase the chances of performing them consistently.

Building Momentum:

Once you have a solid foundation of habits, it becomes easier to add more to it.

How to Implement Habit Stacking:**1. Identify Current Habits:**

Observe your daily routine and identify the habits you perform consistently.

2. Choose a Desired Habit:

Pick a new habit you want to incorporate into your routine.

3. Stack the Habits:

Choose an existing habit that naturally precedes or follows the new habit you want to create.

4. Use the "If...Then" Structure:

Formulate the habit in a clear "if...then" statement (e.g., "After I drink my morning coffee, I will do 10 minutes of stretching").

5. Be Consistent:

Repeat the stacked habit consistently to allow the new habit to become ingrained.

MONTHLY EVALUATION**Monthly Progress Review****Achievement Analysis:**

- Goals met
- Challenges overcome
- Unexpected wins
- Areas for improvement

Metrics Tracking:

- Happiness score
- Energy levels
- Relationship quality
- Financial progress

Suggested Meditation Log:

Date	Type	Duration	Benefits
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Gratitude Journal

Daily entries with:

- 3 grateful moments
- Impact reflection
- Future appreciation

Mood Tracker

*Often useful to identify patterns that help inform changes to avoid particular challenges.

Detailed daily mood mapping with:

- Time of day
- Trigger events
- Response patterns
- Coping strategies

Financial Wellness

Joy-Based Budget:

- Essential needs
- Experience investments
- Learning opportunities
- Pleasure purchases

SUPPORT AND ACCOUNTABILITY

Accountability Partner Check-ins

An accountability partner is someone who supports another person in sticking to a commitment or goal by providing encouragement, regular check-ins, and holding them accountable for their actions.

Here's a more detailed explanation:

Definition:

An accountability partner is a trusted person who helps you achieve a specific goal or maintain a commitment.

Purpose:

They provide the external motivation and support needed to stay on track and follow through with your goals.

Role:

They typically check in regularly to discuss progress, offer encouragement during tough times, and help you stay focused.

Relationship:

This can be a one-way or two-way relationship, where one person is the "accountability partner" or both people hold each other accountable.

Examples:

You could use an accountability partner to help you exercise regularly, study for a test, finish a project, or quit a bad habit.

Benefits:

Research indicates that having an accountability partner can improve consistency, enhance motivation, and ultimately increase the chances of achieving your goals.

Weekly meeting template:

- Progress share
- Challenges discussion
- Solution brainstorming
- Next week planning

Support Network Map

- Personal supporters/life-coaches
- Professional mentors
- Wellness advisors
- Activity partners

CELEBRATION AND REFLECTION

Success Journal

- Small wins
- Major milestones
- Unexpected joys
- Learned lessons

Quarterly Celebration Planner

- **Achievement recognition**- celebrate your successes deliberately
- **Progress parties**- celebrate your successes publicly
- **Reward system**- Small things that reinforce positively
- **Future motivation**- What are the next success steps?

Implementation Guidelines:

1. **Start with one section at a time**- intense focus leads to successful habit formation
2. **Customize templates to your needs**- Your canvas is unique
3. Review and adjust regularly- Cycle through, cycle back in constant effort to “level up”. **Consider the “5 R’s”**
 - a. **Reflection** is looking back to empower learning forward. In research, it's learning from mistakes by being honest about our process and willing to take a critical perspective. **Re-tooling** is the *natural selection* process in research; the ability after reflection to recognize that something isn't working, and then make **re-calibrating** changes to the research design or process. **Re-framing** is the process of creating an adjusted context for the research that reflects the new responsive process that reflecting and re-tooling has resulted in. **Re-focusing** is the product of distributed leadership within the group; a willingness from all sides to embrace and value the new or adjusted research direction. The five R's of action research are responsive strategies that allow us to function as an action-based researcher's understanding that all is not lost if the organic nature of our effort to improve causes (as it nearly always does) a deviation from the original life-based research plan.
4. **Celebrate progress consistently**- We are, after all, behaviorists
5. **Build sustainable habits gradually**- Go slow, to go fast.

Happiness Habits Daily Journaling

Daily Check-in:

- Energy level (1-5)
- Organization task completed
- Relationship moment
- Work progress
- Mindfulness practice

- Acts of kindness
- Gratitude moment

Monthly Reflection and Review

Monthly Evaluation:

- What worked well?
- What needs adjustment?
- Next month's focus:

Now go ahead and start planning your own personal happiness project!

Create your personal happiness project:

1. Choose your first focus area
2. Set 3 specific resolutions
3. Plan implementation steps
4. Schedule regular check-ins

Remember to:

- Track progress daily
- Review weekly
- Adjust monthly
- ***Celebrate small wins***

Note: This workbook is designed to support short, and long term practice over several months to implement personal happiness strategies.

The Happiness Project Workbook - Activity Examples

STRATEGY 1- Happiness Requires Conscious Effort and a Systematic Approach

Personal Happiness Assessment

- Complete a "Happiness Wheel" exercise (sample below)
 - **Step 1:** Grab a piece of blank paper and draw a circle with 8 pie pieces. Fill out each pie piece with the top 8 areas of life that are important to you and give each pie piece (area of happiness) a ranking out of 10.
 - **Step 2:** After you rank each area, connect the dots in order.
 - **Step 3:** Outside of each area, write down how many hours each week you invest in that activity or area.

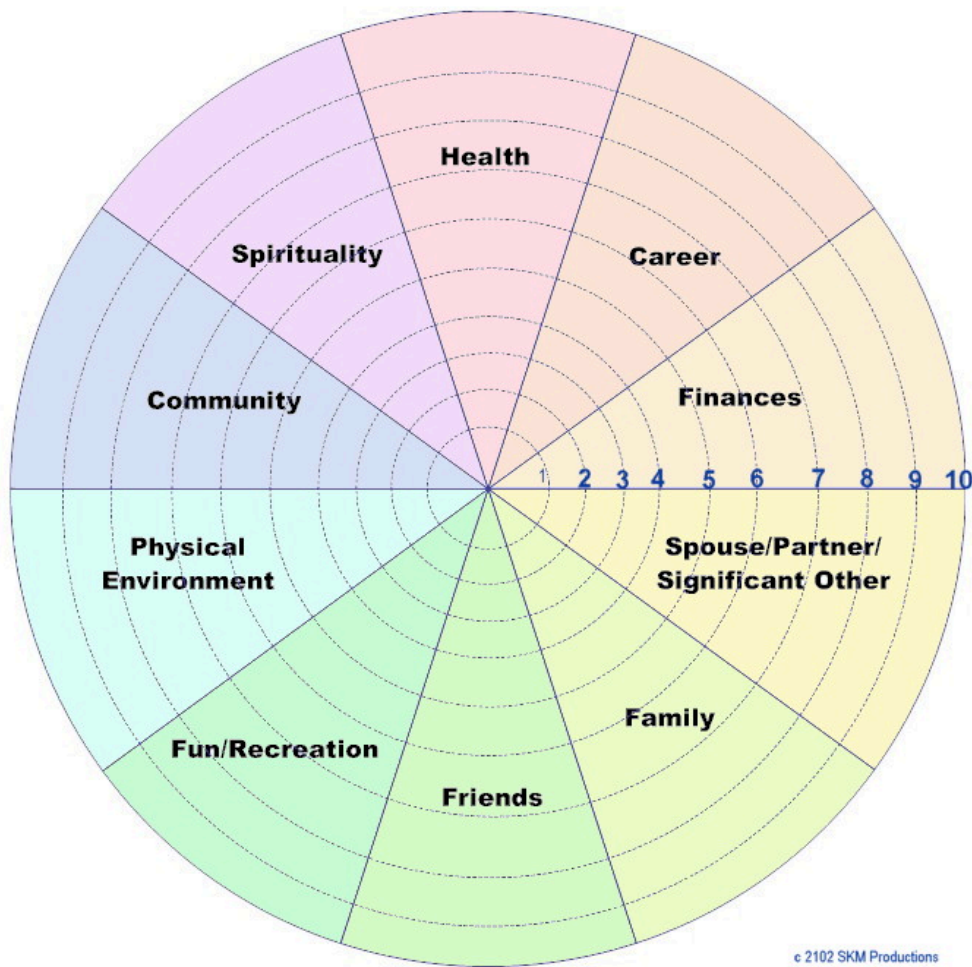


Image taken from [Positive Living Now](#)

- **Step 4:** What would be perfect? In a perfect world, how much time (or money) would you need to invest in each category to rank your happiness within that category a 10 out of 10? There are 112 hours in a week (if you eliminate 8 hours / day for sleep) – If you are not investing as much of this time into things that matter to you, you have some work to do.
- **Step 5: Make Meaningful Improvements!** Now that you know what categories are important to you, how happy you are within each category, how much time you are investing in each category, and how much time is required to achieve happiness within each category you are in a much better position to make meaningful improvements.
 - Daily mood tracking using emoji stickers
 - Create a "Before" snapshot of your life
 - Example Activity: "Rule of Eight" time audit
 - Track how you spend each hour for 3 days
 - Identify activities that increase/decrease happiness
 - Rate each activity's impact on mood (1-5)

STRATEGY 2- Energy and Order Are Foundational to Happiness

Energy and Order Activities

Physical Vitality Examples:

- 10-minute morning stretch routine
- "Eat the Rainbow" weekly meal plan
- 7-day sleep improvement challenge

Organization Examples:

- "15-minute Declutter Sprint"
- "One In, One Out" challenge
 - The "one-in, one-out" rule is a simple decluttering strategy: before acquiring a new item, you must get rid of a similar item you already own, helping to maintain a clutter-free space.

Here's a breakdown of the "one-in, one-out" rule:

The Concept:

- The core idea is to create a balance between what you bring into your home and what you let go of.

How it Works:

- Before purchasing a new item, ask yourself if you already own something similar. If the answer is yes, consider donating, selling, or discarding the existing item before acquiring the new one.

Benefits:

- Reduces Clutter: By limiting the amount of similar items you own, you can prevent your home from becoming cluttered.
- Promotes Minimalism: This rule can be a helpful step towards a more minimalist lifestyle.
- Encourages Thoughtful Consumption: It encourages you to be more mindful of your purchases and whether you truly need the item.

Variations:

- The 30-Day Minimalism Game: This challenge involves decluttering a certain number of items each day, starting with one item on the first day and increasing the number of items to be decluttered each day.
- The 12-12-12 Challenge: This involves finding 12 items to donate, 12 items to throw away, and 12 items to relocate.
- One Room Per Week Challenge: Dedicate each week to decluttering a different room in your home.
 - "5-Things" daily tidying ritualSample Task: Clear your desk using the "Keep, Donate, Trash" method

STRATEGY 3- Nurture Relationships to Boost Happiness

Connection Examples:

- "Coffee Date Challenge": Schedule 4 catch-ups monthly
- "Gratitude Letter Writing": Write one detailed letter weekly
- "Family Game Night" implementation
 - Sample Activity: "Active Listening Practice"
- Partner sharing for 5 minutes uninterrupted
- Summarize what you heard
- Ask meaningful follow-up questions

STRATEGY 4- Find Joy in Work and Pursue Passions

Career Development:

- "Skill-Building Fridays": Learn one new work skill weekly

- "Project Success Journal"
- "Mentor Coffee Chats"

Hobby Development:

- "Try Something New Tuesday"
- "30-Day Creative Challenge"
- "Passion Project Hour"

Example: Create a "Skills I Want to Learn" vision board

STRATEGY 5- Practice Mindfulness and Gratitude

Daily Practices:

- "Morning Pages" writing exercise
 - Morning pages refer to the practice of writing three pages of longhand, stream-of-consciousness thoughts first thing in the morning. This unedited and uninhibited writing serves as a form of brain drain, allowing individuals to unclog their minds and overcome mental blocks.
- "Mindful Walking" during lunch break
- "Evening Reflection" routine
 - Sample Exercise: "**5-4-3-2-1 Sensory Awareness**"
List: 5 things you see, 4 you feel, 3 you hear, 2 you smell, 1 you taste

STRATEGY 6- Cultivate a Positive Attitude and Good Manners

Positivity Practices:

- "Smile and Wave" morning challenge
- "Random Acts of Kindness" bingo
- "Complaint-Free Day" challenge
 - Example Activity: "**Gratitude Scavenger Hunt**"
Find and photograph 5 things that make you happy daily

STRATEGY 7- Money Can Contribute to Happiness When Spent Wisely

Money Management:

- "Joy-Per-Dollar" spending analysis
- "Experience Fund" saving challenge
- "Mindful Shopping" worksheet (Appendix A)
 - Sample Exercise: Create a "**Happiness Budget**"
Categorize expenses by how much joy they bring

SUGGESTED GOAL-SETTING/TRACKING/REFLECTION STRATEGIES

Tracking Resolution Activities

Goal-Setting:

- "Resolution Reset" weekly check-in
- "Progress Photo Friday"
- "Success Celebration" ritual

Example: "**Habit Stacking**"

Add new habits to existing routines (e.g., gratitude practice while making morning coffee)

Happiness Habits Calendar Activities

Daily Practices:

- "**Morning Intention Setting**"
- "**Midday Energy Boost**"

To combat that midday slump and get a boost of energy, consider staying hydrated, eating a balanced lunch with whole grains and fiber, and getting some light exercise or taking a short break.

Here's a more detailed breakdown of strategies to boost your midday energy:

Hydration is Key:

Drink plenty of water.

Dehydration can lead to fatigue and lower energy levels, so make sure you're drinking enough water throughout the day.

Hydrate before you caffeinate:

Staying hydrated is crucial for maintaining energy levels, even before reaching for a cup of coffee.

Fuel Your Body with Healthy Foods:

Eat a balanced lunch:

Choose a meal that includes whole grains, lean protein, and fiber-rich vegetables to provide sustained energy.

Snack strategically:

Opt for healthy snacks like nuts, yogurt, or fruit to keep your energy levels stable throughout the afternoon.

Consider these midday snacks:

- Avocado: A good source of healthy fats for sustained energy.
- Macadamia nuts: Another source of healthy fats and nutrients.
- Nut butter paired with fruit: Provides a combination of protein and healthy fats.

- Banana: A quick and easy source of energy.
- Fresh raspberries: A good source of antioxidants and fiber.
- Yogurt: Contains protein and lactose, a milk sugar used for energy.

Get Moving:

Take a short walk:

Even a quick walk during your lunch break can help boost your energy and improve your mood.

Do some light exercise:

Engage in a short workout or stretching session to increase blood flow and release endorphins.

Get out of the office:

Change your scenery and get some fresh air to help you feel more energized.

Other Tips:

Take a break:

A short break from work can help you refocus and recharge your energy levels.

Listen to music:

Music can stimulate your brain and help you feel more energized.

Prioritize sleep:

Getting enough sleep is essential for maintaining energy levels and overall well-being.

Manage stress:

Stress can lead to fatigue, so find healthy ways to manage stress and promote relaxation.

Limit caffeine intake after midday:

While caffeine can provide a temporary energy boost, excessive consumption, especially later in the day, can disrupt your sleep and lead to a crash later.

- **"Evening Reflection"**

- Sample Activity: **"Three Good Things"**

Write three positive experiences before bed

Reflection Activities

Review Exercises:

- "Monthly Milestone Mapping"
- "Success Story Journaling"
- "Growth Grid" completion
- Example Activity: "Happiness Progress Portfolio"
- Take "Before and After" photos
- Record measurable improvements
- Document emotional growth

Bonus Group Activities:

"Happiness Book Club"

- Monthly reading and discussion
- Shared implementation strategies
- Group support system

"Accountability Partners"

- Weekly check-ins
- Shared goals tracking
- Celebration of wins

"Community Impact Project"

- Group volunteer activities
- Shared acts of kindness
- Collective gratitude practice

MINDFUL SHOPPING CHECKLIST TO REDUCE CONSUMPTION

..... /

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Unsubscribe from store email lists | <input type="checkbox"/> Avoid "buy now, pay later" services |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Make a list when shopping & set budgets | <input type="checkbox"/> Opt for reusable over single-use |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Plan & schedule times for shopping | <input type="checkbox"/> Set a monthly, "no buy" challenge |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Use the "one in, one out" rule | <input type="checkbox"/> Prioritize local & ethical businesses |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Sleep on it before making a purchase | <input type="checkbox"/> Choose items with minimal packaging |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Shop with a purpose - avoid "just looking" | <input type="checkbox"/> Limit online shopping |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Research sustainable brands beforehand | <input type="checkbox"/> Be skeptical of sales and deals |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Stick to a "need, not want" mindset | <input type="checkbox"/> Repair before replacing |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Invest in versatile, timeless pieces | <input type="checkbox"/> Use the "cost per use" method |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Avoid trend-driven purchases | <input type="checkbox"/> Create a "wish list parking lot" |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Shop secondhand | <input type="checkbox"/> Shop with cash, not cards |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Apply the "three question rule" | <input type="checkbox"/> Engage in community swaps |

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