

audible ORIGINAL

TAKE
CONTROL
OF YOUR
LIFE
WITH **MEL ROBBINS**

**How to Silence Fear and
Win the Mental Game**

COMPANION WORKBOOK

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INTRODUCTION

LET'S GET STARTED

IN THE FIRST CHAPTER, YOU WERE ASKED:

**Right now there's an area of your life that's not working for you. What is it?
What area of your life do you want to change?**

When you think about taking control of that area of your life, what's your biggest fear?

In any area of your life that's not working, fear is winning.

You can either let the uncertainty and the fear around the thing that you're facing trigger your old patterns—or you can learn how to move forward in a way that actually gets you what you want.

Through this audiobook and this workbook, you WILL be able to silence fear and win the mental game—but you need to show up and do the work. This workbook will lead you and show you how.

There is also a free video series that serves as a companion to this workbook. You can find it at www.youtube.com/melrobbinslive in the playlist called “Take Control of Your Life.”

Now, let's dig into each session.

COACHING SESSION

DAN

DAN'S TAKEAWAY #1: Dan's pattern.

For each person, there will be a recap of the three step process that they will use to take control of their life. Later in the workbook, you will do the same exercise. By seeing their answers, it will get you started in thinking about how you will answer these questions yourself.

Dan's fear:

Dan is afraid that he's not going to figure out what he should do with his life.

Fear triggers this repeated pattern in Dan:

This fear triggers him to try to figure it out by thinking and thinking and thinking. And all this thinking keeps him stuck spinning ideas.

Dan's new pattern:

He's replacing thinking with moving brick by brick, one action at a time.

DAN'S TAKEAWAY #2: Don't speed up; slow down.

Being busy doesn't mean you're in control. If you're driven by your fears, it's a sign that you need to slow down. You take real control of your life by slowing down first.

Where in your life do you feel driven by a nervous, frantic energy?

In these situations, you are driven by your fears.

▪

▪

Where in your life do you feel expansive, calm, and grounded?

In these situations, you are driven by the tug of your dreams.

▪

▪

When you wake up, how do you feel most mornings? What are you present to?

▪

▪

If you're busy, you don't have time to face the things that scare you. What do you avoid by keeping yourself busy?

▪

▪

DEEPER DIVE

Dive deeper into the content and learn tools that are not in the audiobook.

I want you to adopt a practice that will help you slow down.

Any practice that gets you paying attention to what's going on around you and inside of you is going to engage what's called your "parasympathetic nervous system"—AKA, the part of your body that keeps your cool and helps you relax.

When you're running on stress energy all day, you're never going to get familiar with what's really going on inside you. You have too much agita and that impacts your ability to get clarity on what you really want and what you have to do to get it.

10 SCIENCE-BACKED HABITS THAT ARE PROVEN TO GET YOU IN TOUCH WITH YOUR INNER WISDOM:

1. Take a walk in the woods or get out in nature
2. Take ten deep breaths
3. Take a long bath
4. Do a detox from the news and social media
5. Spend at least 30 minutes working on a creative hobby
6. Spend time with family and friends who support you
7. Say 5 things that you are grateful for
8. Meditate for 10 minutes
9. Engage in relaxing exercise like yoga, hiking, or tai chi
10. Sit in silence for 15 minutes

DAN'S TAKEAWAY #3: You have to state it to create it.

I understand that it may feel embarrassing or hard or uncomfortable stating what you want, but the second that you state something, you claim it.

If you want to see your dreams come true, it starts with the courage to state them—without diminishing them.

State your dream here, proudly, in detail:

Not sure of your dream yet? Write down one thing that you would love to have in your life.

How do you downplay or diminish this dream?

Check all that apply and/or write in your own answer.

- Do you not celebrate small wins?
- Do you not ask for help?
- Do you not share your dreams?
- Do you procrastinate when it comes time to take action?
- Do you say "don't laugh"?

My answer:

DEEPER DIVE

MAKE AN IF/THEN PLAN:

You've just written down all of the ways in which you self-sabotage and diminish your dreams. For each item on that list, I want you to create an If/Then plan.

If/Then plans are an incredibly effective way to help you stick to your goals. It's simply a backup plan that you make ahead of time.

Researchers at Columbia University found that making an If/Then plan increases success rates on goals from 39% to 91%.

Continue on to the next page and learn more about If/Then planning.

Here are some examples of IF/THEN planning:

IF I start to hear those voices of self-doubt go off in my head again, **THEN** I will repeat an empowering thought, like "I am powerful. I can change my life."

IF I start to scroll through social media, **THEN** I will 5-4-3-2-1 jump up and launch myself into the day's goals.

IF I know I have a busy week that could derail my schedule, **THEN** I will take 3 minutes in the morning to complete my journal planning before I get started on anything else.

IF I find myself telling a friend "I doubt I'll achieve my goal," **THEN** I will say immediately right after, "But I'm trying my best and putting in progress each day."

IF I know my mother will make me feel bad about my dreams, **THEN** I will protect myself by limiting our phone conversations to 10 minutes.

Three ways I downplay my dreams or self-sabotage them:

1.

2.

3.

Create an If/Then plan for each way you downplay your dreams.

1. If I _____, then I will _____

2. If I _____, then I will _____

3. If I _____, then I will _____

DAN'S TAKEAWAY #4: Go brick by brick to make it stick.

Thinking big is going to paralyze you. Instead, the answer is to think small. Break down your goals into small chunks. Simplify your goals into the smallest actions forward everyday and then just start working on it. The secret to getting control over your life and working towards your dreams is making one small bit of progress every single day on the things that matter to you.

What is something you've been interested in pursuing?

What is one teeny, tiny, little brick that you could lay in the direction of this thing?

EXAMPLES: Make a phone call. Sign up for a class. Apply for a job at your local coffee shop on the week-ends (or any shop that interests you). Sign up at the gym. Have a conversation with the person that you're in a relationship with. Sign up for a therapy appointment.

How will I know if I completed this brick?

If you don't have a concrete answer, this brick is not specific enough.

If you need to, make this brick even smaller:

What's the biggest obstacle to laying this single brick?

If the obstacle feels too overwhelming, the brick is too big.

If you need to, break it down into something smaller:

DEEPER DIVE

HOW TO ACHIEVE YOUR GOALS:

Want to make your brick by brick plan foolproof? Use one (or all!) of these five strategies:

1. Pull out your calendar, RIGHT NOW, and schedule this action you just wrote down.

If it's not planned for, it's not going to happen. Plan around your jobs, kids, whatever is in your life. Make it an appointment on your calendar.

Did you put this action on your calendar? When will you work on this action?

2. Every day, do something small to harness momentum towards this brick.

This idea comes from a researcher at Stanford. When you set the bar really low, it's easier to stick to your goals.

If you've started getting to the gym, don't put pressure on yourself to a long workout. Or, if you've started saving money, start with small numbers. As long as you do five jumping jacks, or put away \$5 in your savings account, or put 15 minutes of work into your new business, you're making forward progress—and keeping the momentum alive.

How can I make my brick even smaller—so that it's foolproof?

If it's small enough, what can I do RIGHT NOW to work on it?

3. Set up simple reminders about your brick.

Simple reminders have very powerful effects. Text message reminders increase positive habits, like saving money, taking needed pills for health, reduced smoking, and increased voting.

Often times, out of sight means out of mind. So, what do you need to do? Set reminders in your calendar, on your phone, get notifications involved—have daily reminders of your goal pop up each day.

I want you, right now, to set up a recurring alarm on your phone or notification on your calendar to remind you of your brick.

What will your reminder say and what time will you set it to go off?

4. Keep a Did-It list.

My challenge for you is to keep a “Did-It” list. It’s the opposite of a To-Do list. Fill it with every single small accomplishment that you complete and keep it in a visible place.

Seeing your progress and how much you have completed will inspire you to keep pushing.

Where I will hang my Did-It list:

The first thing I can write on it that I have done (hint, you’re making progress on this workbook!):

5. Focus on what you’ve accomplished.

You can measure progress by how much you’ve completed or how much you have left to do.

A study from University of Chicago discovered that you’ll be more motivated if you focus on whichever of those two is smaller. This is because each new action feels even more impactful when compared to a smaller list of steps.

Once you complete your first brick, write down what you have accomplished here:

DAN'S TAKEAWAY #5: Passion is energy, not a destiny.

Passion isn't a person, place, or thing- and you won't find it outside of you. Passion begins inside with curiosity. You grow into the things that interest you. Passion is about the pursuit, not the end game.

What are the things that naturally energize you?

What do you like to learn about?

What would you do for free?

Whose life are you interested in or envious of?

How can you add more of these things into your life?

What depletes you?

How can you remove one of these things from your life today?

When something energizes you, add more of it to your life. When something depletes you, figure out how to do less of that thing. As often as possible, follow the energy inside you. That is where passion lives.

Additional thoughts ...

COACHING SESSION

HEATHER

HEATHER'S TAKEAWAY #1: Heather's pattern.

If you can change your response to fear, you will take control of your life. By breaking down each person's fear into a clear, three-step process, you can do the same with your own.

Heather's fear:

She's afraid of failing.

Fear triggers this repeated pattern in Heather:

Because she's afraid of failing, she tells herself not to try. She focuses on being perfect. She tells herself not to try. She tells herself she's gonna hear a no. She talks negatively to herself. All of this paralyzes her...and keeps her from moving forward with her business.

Heather's new pattern:

Replacing self-defeating thoughts with a new growth mindset that focuses more on effort than the end goal.

HEATHER'S TAKEAWAY #2: The secret to mind control is body awareness.

When you feel out of control, your body state changes before your mind even becomes aware of it.

Follow this three-step process to taking control of your body state:

1. How does your body change when you go on edge or feel out of control?

Circle all of the things you feel or write in your own:

THROAT CLOSING

CHEST/HEART TIGHTENING

TEARS IN EYES

STOMACH HURTS

NAUSEOUS

HANDS TREMBLE

FACE FLUSHES

HEART BEATS QUICKLY

RASH ON BODY

Write your own:

Don't know yet? Pay attention today, and come back to this exercise.

2. Observe how the changes in your body happen before your mind catches up.

Now that you're aware of how your body changes when you feel out of control or under stress, start to pay attention to the exact moment the physical changes start—and the moment when your brain begins feeling out of control. There's a gap there—and it's a very important gap.

3. The next time your body goes on alert, use an exercise that will help you slow down your body.

Start this exercises as soon as you feel the changes in your body. These exercises relax something called the vagus nerve, which can turn off your “fight or flight” stress response.

Select the one you will use and have it on hand:

- You can breathe slowly and you can count to 90.
- You can do 90 seconds of exercise.
- You can meditate for 90 seconds.
- You can count backwards from 90 and breathe slowly.
- You can hug somebody for 90 seconds.
- You can ground your feet, feel your body in your chair, and take deep breaths for 90 seconds.
- You can breathe slowly and get up and walk around.
- You can hold someone's hand for 90 seconds.

Write your own:

The longer and slower you can make your breaths, the more effective you will be at stopping stress response as soon as 90 seconds finishes.

HEATHER'S TAKEAWAY #3: Little moments can have lasting impact.

You developed coping mechanisms to deal with feeling out of control as a kid. Sometimes it was the “smallest” things that created patterns you still live with today. Once you recognize these patterns, you can start to intentionally replace them with ones that empower you.

Use this four-step process to help you identify the patterns:

1. What “little moments” really affected you?

Realize that no moment is too small because your body remembers.

What small moments—especially from the ages of 5 to 10—stand out in your mind as having caused you upset?

What happened and how did you feel as a result?

Specifically, what feelings came up after this event?

Circle what applies or write your own.

EMBARRASSMENT

FEELING ASHAMED

SCARED, UPSET

NERVOUS

OUT OF CONTROL

Write your own:

2. What pattern did you create to avoid this feeling?

Examples: Developed a habit of quitting, stopped trying, became a chameleon so you wouldn't stand out, started lying, became a class clown, became afraid of feedback so you avoided situations where you might get it, became angry, started playing the victim.

3. How does this pattern exist in your life today?

This week, start noticing every time you play out the behavior pattern that stems from that "little thing" in your childhood.

How does your body feel in those situations? How does your posture shift? What changes happen?

- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____

4. Can you replace this old pattern with a new, empowering one?

MY CURRENT HABITS

Examples: shutting up, lying

WHAT I CAN DO INSTEAD

Examples: speaking up, tell the truth

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

How can I remind myself to create this new pattern?

- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____

HEATHER'S TAKEAWAY #4: Self-criticism is a coping mechanism.

You become self-critical in an attempt to shield yourself from the criticism of others, and most of us learn this from our parents. As adults, we keep these negative loops in our heads and they become habits. So, even when you're no longer hearing those criticisms from the outside world, you're still criticizing yourself—because you've dug trenches in your brain with these thoughts by going over them again and again and again.

Answer these very powerful questions:

Who was the parent you most craved attention and affection from?

What did you do to get that attention?

In what ways were you criticized when you were younger?

It's important that you take ownership of the fact that now, despite how your parents criticized you or expected from you—now you are the one doing it to yourself. It also means you have the power to change it.

Answer the following questions:

How are you hard on yourself today?

**When you feel a self-critical thought pop up, recognize it, and ask yourself:
“Where did this thought come from? Is this true?”**

Fill in the columns below:

NEGATIVE THOUGHTS I HAVE	SOURCE OF THIS THOUGHT	IS THIS THOUGHT TRUE?
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

DEEPER DIVE

DEALING WITH SELF-CRITICISM:

Use these three strategies to help you deal with self-criticism.

1. Create anchor thoughts.

Fill up your tool box with anchor thoughts that work for you. An anchor thought is a positive image and/or words that you can call on when you need them. Think back to a moment in your life when you felt good inside.

A positive memory or image that I can use as my anchor thought:

The next time you start beating yourself up, pull out that anchor thought and repeat words like “I am doing the best I can”.

Continue on to the next page and learn more about how to deal with self-criticism.

2. Spend time with positive people.

Being hard on yourself is a product of your training, but that doesn't mean you can't change that line of thinking. .

Start surrounding yourself with cheerleaders—people who really support and uplift you.

The cheerleaders in my life:

- _____
- _____

3. Picture someone else.

When you start berating yourself, picture your best friend or a sibling. Would you say those words to her or him or would you point out what they're doing well and encourage them to try something else?

The person I will imagine I am talking to when I say negative things to myself:

- _____

What I would tell this person if I knew they were being self-critical:

HEATHER'S TAKEAWAY #5: Your fate is not fixed.

Heather was dealing with a fixed mindset.

Fixed mindset recap:

With a fixed mindset, people believe their skills and talents are fixed traits and therefore cannot change. Usually, this results because someone has been praised for that trait: "You're so smart!" "You're so athletic!" "You're such a great artist!" And then, when you fail, your self-esteem plummets—because you think you've tapped out your skills.

Growth mindset:

The opposite of a fixed mindset is a growth mindset. With a growth mindset, people have an underlying belief that their talents can grow with time and experience. You know that what matters is effort that you put in—and you are 1,000% in control of that.

The good news? Anyone can build a growth mindset—just tap into this research-backed method from Carol Dweck out of Stanford University, the leading researcher on this concept.

1. Learn to hear the fixed mindset voice in your head.

Select which of these thoughts you've had...

- "Are you sure you can do it? Maybe you don't have the talent."
- "I'm not any good at this."
- "What if you fail? You'll be a failure."
- "If I can't do it perfectly, I shouldn't even try."
- "People will laugh at you for thinking you could do it."
- "If you don't try, you can protect yourself."
- "This would have been a snap if you really had talent."
- "If I don't get chosen, it's because I wasn't good enough."
- "It's not too late to quit, make an excuse, and keep yourself from failing."
- "I've never been good at this, so I never will."
- "I know I'll be bad at that, so I'm not even going to try."

In what situations do you find fixed mindset thoughts creep up? It is at work? At home? With certain activities or skills?

I want you to become aware of these thoughts and notice them if they come up.

2. Recognize you have a choice.

When you face criticism, setbacks, or failure, realize that you can choose how you want to view it. Do you want to put on the negative glasses and quit? Or, you can say yourself, "Oh, I guess I didn't work hard enough. Time to try a new strategy."

As simple as it sounds, just realizing you have a choice in whether you listen to the thoughts in your head is key.

3. When the voices in your head turned to the fixed mindset, talk back to them.

Write how you can talk back to your top three fixed mindset thoughts:

MY FIXED MINDSET THOUGHTS

Example:

"You can't do that—you're not talented enough."

1.

2.

3.

HOW I WILL RESPOND

Example:

"I don't know if I can do it now, but with effort I can."

1.

2.

3.

HEATHER'S TAKEAWAY #6: If you want control, expect a no.

To get anything worthwhile in your life, you're going to hit bumps along the way, and you're gonna hit a lot of rejection. So, instead of letting the no's derail you, I want you to expect them. Step up to the plate. Swing. Do it again. I want you to know that sometimes you're going to strike out and IT'S OKAY.

What is something that you really want—but you've heard “no”?

In most cases, if you hear no, you needed to hear it. It's because you aren't good enough yet. 93% of all companies that ultimately become successful had to get rid of their initial plan...because they turned out not to be good enough!

How can you reframe that “no” into something empowering?

What can you learn from your “no's”?

Examples: “I wasn't ready yet. Now, I know what to improve.” “That feedback will make my idea even stronger.” “I need to improve my business plan now so it's even clearer.”

DEEPER DIVE

WHAT'S THE WORST THAT WILL HAPPEN IF YOU KEEP SHOWING UP?

When outcomes are unknown, we feel out of control of what will happen.

This is a technique recommended by a professor at Harvard Medical School on how to beat a fear of rejection or failing at something.

Here's what you do:

Think about something you're scared of but that you want to do:

For example, you may fear applying for a new job but getting rejected.

Something I'm scared of-but want to do:

Now imagine an outcome even worse than you originally thought. Example: you not only didn't get the job, you didn't get it because you spilled coffee on the interviewer AND the drawing that her 5-year old daughter made that morning.

The worst case (but still realistic) outcome that could happen if I tried and failed:

Sit with that. Follow your breathing. It's not the end of the world. Just keep breathing.

Take that image and hold on to it as long as possible.

Even in the worst case, you survived the no-and there's something you can learn from it. This strategy will give you the courage to do that thing that scares you, because you will understand that no matter what happens, you can handle the outcome..

HEATHER'S TAKEAWAY #7: Stop living the ladder life.

Climbing the ladder of success that society has rammed down our throats doesn't bring happiness or any real sense of control.

What are you convinced that if you just had you would be happier?

Examples: A bigger house, a new jacket, a different job, those shoes, more money, more followers

So, if "the ladder life" doesn't bring happiness, what does? Keep following this guide and you will learn ways to create real happiness in your life that you can start doing today.

DEEPER DIVE

THE 4 THINGS THAT BRING HAPPINESS

1. Stop your wandering mind.

A study found that the happiest people didn't experience any more positive events than the least happy people. Seriously, it's not like happy people have "better" lives.

Instead, do you know what happiness is determined by? It's determined by how you allocate your attention, according to a researcher at the London School of Economics.

A landmark study from Harvard found that people spend 46.7% of their days with their minds wandering. And by wandering, I don't mean thinking up divergent ideas that will change the world. I'm talking about how we spend HALF of our days consumed by totally distracting thoughts that are unrelated to what we're doing.

When our minds wander, they go to the default. And in our society, the default is "the ladder life"—it's a society that always wants you to buy more and stand out more to feel "happy." You're inundated with ads of products that you suddenly want—and a social media feed that makes you feel like you're a step behind on the ladder of life.

Continue on to the next page and learn more about finding happiness.

Another finding? Mind wandering is actually the cause, not the consequence, of unhappiness. Letting your mind wander actually leads to unhappiness in the short-term.

How can you stop your wandering mind to increase your happiness?

Right now, write down a list of 5 things that you enjoy doing.

- 1. _____
- 2. _____
- 3. _____
- 4. _____
- 5. _____

The next time that you engage in one of these activities, focus on bringing your senses into the experience. What do you taste, see, feel, hear, smell?

Something I am grateful for right now:

Find something directly in the moment that you can savor and express gratitude for. Express your appreciation for this thing out loud.

When your mind wanders again, bring your attention back to your senses.

Repeat this process the next time that you do something on your "happiness list." The more you do this, the easier it becomes. Once you're a pro at being mindful during your favorite activities, use this same process in other daily events.

2. Do nice things for other people.

Researchers asked people to do 5 small acts of kindness in one day. The results? People were happier for an entire week!

It's easy to make other people's lives better—and it's a win-win, because it boosts both you and the person that you are helping. Even something small, like a kind word or a note of encouragement, helps.

Five ideas for acts of kindness:

- 1. _____
- 2. _____
- 3. _____
- 4. _____
- 5. _____

One of them that I can do today:

When I'm going to do it:

[Afterwards]: What I learned from this act of kindness:

3. Start the day happy.

Your mood in the morning affects your productivity all day, research from Ohio State University shows.

How can you start the day happy?

Circle the things you would like to do:

- EAT A HEALTHY BREAKFAST MEDITATE SEND A THANK-YOU EMAIL OR WRITE A THANK YOU NOTE
- EXPRESS GRATITUDE WAKE UP EARLY SO THAT YOU'RE NOT RUSHED DON'T HIT THE SNOOZE BUTTON
- WAIT AT LEAST 20 MINUTES AFTER WAKING TO CHECK ANY ELECTRONICS EXERCISE

Write your own:

One thing I will adopt tomorrow morning:

The #1 obstacle keeping me from doing this thing:

How I will overcome this obstacle?

[Afterwards] How did I feel after I made this change in my morning?

4. Focus on your relationships.

Researchers have found that 70% of your personal happiness can be explained by your relationships, including your relationships with your friends, family, co-workers, and neighbors.

At end of our lives, one of the biggest regrets that people have is that they didn't spend enough time with the people that they loved. In fact, research from UPenn found that one question can best predict if you will be alive and happy at age 80:

Is there someone in your life whom you would feel comfortable phoning at four in the morning to tell your troubles to? If so, name them here:

Relationships are everything. If you don't invest your time and energy in your relationships, they will become weaker. However, with some deliberate planning and action, you can keep all of your relationships—with your friends, with your romantic partner, and with yourself—strong.

A study by a Dutch sociologist found that, on average, we lose half of our close network members every seven years. Scary, I know. But it's within your power to keep those relationships strong. Research shows that staying in touch every 2 weeks is what keeps friendships alive. Does that seem too short? If you go longer without contacting a friend, then make the time that you do connect even more meaningful.

You need to make the effort. Plain and simple. Pick up your phone. Give your friend a call. Schedule time together.

People that I love to spend time with but I haven't reached out to recently:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____

Who I'm going to contact today:

When I'm going to do it:

Additional thoughts....

COACHING SESSION

ROSA

ROSA'S TAKEAWAY #1: Rosa's pattern.

If you can change your response to fear, you will take control of your life. By breaking down each person's fear into a clear, three-step process, you can do the same with your own.

Rosa's fear:

She's afraid of facing the mess that she believes her life has become.

Fear triggers this repeated pattern in Rosa:

She clings to her stuff because it gives her a sense of momentary control—because it's at least something that she can hold onto. The other stuff feels too big, so fear triggers her to focus and obsess about her things.

Rosa's new pattern:

She's replacing hoarding with getting rid of things—so she can make room for more empowered change.

ROSA'S TAKEAWAY #2: Stuff is never going to give you what you seek.

Because there's so much we cannot control, we tend to try to control physical things, which are always in our control. However, this is never going to bring you any sense of real control in your life.

In this exercise, you're going to get real with yourself about where you're using your stuff as a way to distract yourself from dealing with the things that scare you.

Which of these things do you do to distract yourself?

Circle all that apply or add your own.

- GO THROUGH YOUR INBOX REARRANGE THE LIVING ROOM ORGANIZE YOUR CLOSET
- LEAVE BOXES UNPACKED DO THE LAUNDRY TOO MUCH REARRANGE THE FURNITURE
- CLEAN ALL THE TIME DESPAIR ABOUT ALL OF YOUR STUFF, LIKE ROSA GO ON SHOPPING BINGES
- SCAN SOCIAL MEDIA BROWSE ONLINE STORES ORGANIZE THE SPICE RACK
- SORT ALL OF YOUR BOOKS BY COLOR OBSESS ABOUT THE LOOK OF YOUR ONLINE PROFILE

Write your own:

There's nothing inherently wrong with this behavior. But, this behavior leaves you feeling empty and will never help you get control in a REAL way.

The next time you catch yourself starting to do the distracting behavior, stop. Tune in and ask yourself "What am I trying to avoid by doing this instead?"

When you do this thing, what are you avoiding?

The next time you find yourself turning to the behavior you use as a distraction, countdown 5-4-3-2-1 and do one thing toward the thing you're avoiding for just five minutes.

ROSA'S TAKEAWAY #3: Your double life is still your life.

We often display a persona to the world which is in control and large and in charge, but it's not who we really are on the inside.

In what ways do you present a persona to the outside world who "has it all together," even when things may not feel that way inside?

At work or school:

In what you post on social media:

To your friends:

Anything else:

Try breaking out of that and being honest about how you're really feeling and start by showing some self-compassion.

Pick one of these mantras to repeat when you're feeling down on yourself:

I HAVE A BIG HEART. I DESERVE TO FEEL MY BEST. I'M DOING THIS FOR ME.

NOBODY'S PERFECT. I'M DOING MY BEST. I FORGIVE MYSELF.

I AM AN AMAZING PERSON. THERE IS A LOT ABOUT ME TO LOVE.

Write your own:

It's time to start telling the truth. Take one small action at a time to be your full, authentic self in the outside world.

Below are some ideas to get you started. Choose any that you would like to try or include your own.

- Skipping dessert if you want to, even if your friends are pressuring you to order it
- Not having a drink while out if you don't want one
- Being honest with friends and family about how you are when people ask "How are you?"
- Not forcing yourself to appear happy when you don't feel that way
- Expressing all of your emotions and knowing sad emotions are just as valid as happy ones
- Exploring a topic that truly interests you
- Saying "no" to something you don't want to do
- Asking for what you need

Write your own:

ROSA'S TAKEAWAY #4: Your excuses don't make you the exception.

Anytime you have an excuse, that's fear talking. You're always going to have a million excuses. They make you feel like you're in control, but no change is going to happen until you break through them.

1. Start by thinking about what you really want.

What do you really want? Circle which ones apply to you or write in your own.

- I WANT A CLEAN HOUSE. I WANT TO BE IN BETTER HEALTH. I WANT TO RUN A MARATHON.
I WANT TO BE AN ENTREPRENEUR. I WANT TO QUIT MY JOB. I WANT A BETTER RELATIONSHIP WITH MY MOTHER.
I WANT TO STOP DOUBTING MYSELF.

Write your own:

2. List out all of your favorite excuses.

Circle which ones apply to you or write in your own.

- I'M TOO TIRED. I HAD A LONG DAY. I FEEL LIKE EATING THIS.
WHY DO I ALWAYS HAVE TO DIET/BUDGET/DO THE EXTRA WORK? I DON'T HAVE TIME.
WHY CAN'T I HAVE A METABOLISM/JOB/MONEY LIKE MY FRIEND? I DON'T WANT TO. I DON'T FEEL LIKE IT.

Write your own:

3. Look at your list of excuses and decide if you actually want this thing.

Are you willing to do what it takes to change? Are you really willing to move past your excuses? Does it actually matter to you? Is it really a priority?

The thing I want...

- IS a priority for me, so I am committing to taking one small action each day towards it.
- IS NOT a priority for me, so I am going to stop complaining about it.

4. If this thing is a priority for you, start with one brick.

What is ONE small thing you can do to start making progress on this thing? Keep this one brick to be something you can complete in 15 minutes or less. For help in thinking of ideas, look back at what you wrote in Dan's section of this workbook.

The ONE thing I will do that will take just 15 minutes or less:

DEEPER DIVE

1. Get past your excuses by “shrink the time”.

Research shows that imagining time in smaller chunks makes people more proactive about their goals.

If you think you need to dedicate a whole hour to exercising, it may seem so overwhelming that you keep blowing exercise off with excuses like “I don't have time” or “I'll do it tomorrow.”

Instead of trying to do a whole hour from the start—shrink it down to ten minutes. It's guaranteed that you can find just ten minutes to go for a walk, do some planks or some burpees, or a quick round of stretching. This goes for everything, not just exercising.

What can I do for just 10 minutes tomorrow?

Examples: Can you schedule some calls? Throw out one item? Work for 10 minutes on one business priority? What will it be?

2. Pre-plan.

This one is a game changer. Our willpower is not at some constant level all day, waiting around for us to use it. Nope, it gets weaker with each decision we make.

This is why, after resisting chocolate all day, you can't help but have that dessert at night. And there's research backing this. Roy Baumeister, a prominent psychologist, has researched the phenomenon of *decision fatigue*, which is the idea that our willpower decreases with each decision.

Decision fatigue is what leads to analysis paralysis. When your brain is low on mental energy, it's really hard to make good decisions and instead you revert to excuses.

Here is how you pre-plan:

Step 1: Plan each day the night before.

Research from Harvard Business School shows that when we make decisions for our future selves, we make better decisions. So, the night before, plan out as many decisions as you can. This will reduce your decision fatigue the next day.

What can you plan today to set you up for tomorrow?

Examples: plan your outfit, a healthy breakfast, what time you will hit the grocery store and what you will buy, and what you will do if a sugar craving hits.

▪

▪

Step 2: Work on your goal in the morning.

If you have a health goal, workout in the morning. If you have a business goal, tackle it for 10 minutes before work. Do your 10 minutes of cleaning then too, if you are like Rosa.

In the mornings, your willpower is higher because you don't have decision fatigue yet. And if you couple this with planning the night before, you set yourself up for success.

What I will do tomorrow morning:

▪

▪

Step 3: Pre-commit.

Committing in advance takes the question out of whether you will do something or not.

Deciding to hit the gym, even in the mornings, is hard. But getting yourself to an 8 week bootcamp class with your best friend—that you already paid for? Much easier, because there's no question if you are going or not. You parted with your hard earned money and you committed to a friend—you're going.

It's much easier to have discipline when you set things up in your favor!

How can you pre-plan on your goals?

Examples: Sign up for a class. Get a personal trainer or coach. Hire a babysitter for the hour you need to make calls. Set a time to meet with a friend at a coffee shop to work. Schedule meetings in advance.

▪

▪

ROSA'S TAKEAWAY #5: Ask yourself the most important question.

Don't ask "Why am I doing this?" or "What's wrong with me?" Instead, ask "What happened to me?"

What negative experiences have happened to you that impact who you are right now?

.

Once you see what has happened—and realized how it has affected you—it's easier to have compassion for yourself and realize you need to do the work on your past in order to change your patterns in the future.

If your past involved emotional or physical abuse, it is critical that you seek out professional help. You can find a therapist by asking your doctor or by [clicking here](#) to find a therapist in your area.

For trauma, research shows that EMDR, DBT, and CBT therapies can be very effective. You should work with a therapist to find which modality is best for you.

And, the next time that you find yourself being self-critical over any behavior, whether it's hoarding, procrastinating, breaking commitments, blowing off the gym, or snapping at your partner, instead of asking "What's wrong with me?!" Return to the answer you wrote above. What happened to you?

COACHING SESSION

CASEY

CASEY'S TAKEAWAY #1: Casey's pattern.

If you can change your response to fear, you will take control of your life. By breaking down each person's fear into a clear, three-step process, you can do the same with your own.

Casey's fear:

He is terrified of being judged and he's scared of being in a situation where he's going to get called out.

Fear triggers this repeated pattern in Casey:

Because of this fear, he tries to manage what people think about him and avoids situations in which he feels put on the spot.

Casey's new pattern:

He's replacing avoiding situations in which he feels put on the spot with showing up at his office and owning his story with his family and friends.

CASEY'S TAKEAWAY #2: Did you have a break in belonging?

We all have moments in our lives when we feel we don't belong. Because our brains are wired for fitting in, we do whatever it takes to ensure we are accepted. Sometimes that means creating a new persona. For Casey, that was becoming the class clown.

What's your old story?

The first time I felt like I didn't fit in was:

- _____
- _____

In order to fit in, I felt like I needed to...

Examples: be funny, be the smart one, lie, try and blend in, be the teacher's pet

- _____
- _____

How does that story still play out in your life today? Where do you feel like you don't belong now?

CASEY'S TAKEAWAY #3: The power of a diagnosis.

A label is something that is applied by other people. A diagnosis is something that you seek out.

Is there anyone in your life (including yourself) who you suspect learns in a different way?

If you or a loved one has a learning difference, please go get a diagnosis. Understand it, see the patterns, and be proactive about getting the resources and tools that you need.

Remember that in the short term a learning difference is a struggle—but in the long term it is an advantage, particularly when you take the time to reinforce a growth mindset.

CASEY'S TAKEAWAY #4: Introverted vs. Isolated

There's a major difference between being introverted and choosing to isolate yourself. Introverts need time alone to refuel. Isolating yourself, meanwhile, is something you do to attempt to control other people's perceptions of you.

What are things or activities that refuel and recharge you?

▪

▪

How can you add more of these things into your life?

▪

▪

Where in your life do you avoid doing the things you need to do—under the guise that it drains you, tires you, or that you prefer to be alone—and you isolate instead?

Examples: Avoid the office, avoid networking, study alone, spend all your free time alone, skip dinners with friends, stay in bed all weekend.

- _____
- _____
- _____

If you are isolating yourself, I want you to realize this, and start changing your behavior.

What I can do instead of isolating:

- _____
- _____

CASEY'S TAKEAWAY #5: Imposter syndrome

If you're trying something new and feel like an imposter, that's totally normal—and a sign that you're pushing outside of your comfort zone.

But, imposter syndrome isn't just when you're trying something new and you feel like a fraud. It's also when you feel like an imposter in your own life—when you've changed but people still see the old you.

In what ways have you changed from the past?

- _____
- _____

In which situations, or with which people, do you feel like people still see the “old you”?

- _____
- _____

This in-between space can make you question the changes you've made. The fix is to own the changes. It's not always easy, which is why it's important to remember these important lines from Casey:

*Who I was does not dictate who I am or who I'm becoming.
And, all the change came from me, and I need to own that.*

CASEY'S TAKEAWAY #6: Own your story.

When you tell your story in a way that empowers you, it allows you to take control of the narrative of your life and of the direction of your future. When you own your story, you take the power away from anyone else and you give yourself control.

Here is how to own your story:

1. Own up to your actions in the past.

What did you do in the past that caused people to view you in a certain way?

2. Have compassion for yourself in the past.

I forgive myself for doing those things, because I know I was coming from a place of...

3. Reframe the story of how you acted in the past to something empowering.

My new story:

COACHING SESSION

AMY

AMY'S TAKEAWAY #1: Amy's pattern.

If you can change your response to fear, you will take control of your life. By breaking down each person's fear into a clear, three-step process, you can do the same with your own.

Amy's fear:

She's massively afraid of conflict because of how she was raised.

Fear triggers this repeated pattern in Amy:

As a result, she avoids conflict by staying silent.

Amy's new pattern:

She's replacing shutting up with speaking up.

AMY'S TAKEAWAY #2: Your physical response to fear is encoded in your body.

Your body will still feel out of control when you start to change, but you can take control do what you need to do anyway.

What is your physical response to fear?

Look back to your answers from Heather's Takeaway #2 if needed.

What is something that you want to do, but will require courage?

When you go to do this thing, expect the physical symptoms to be in full force—but do it anyway and breathe through it.

As you keep taking courageous action, you will find that it gets easier, and with time, the physical changes will decrease.

AMY'S TAKEAWAY #3: Are you being a chameleon?

When are you hiding in plain sight? You may be doing it just to keep the peace, because you are trying to blend in, or maybe because you want someone to like you. Whatever the reason, it's triggered by the fear of not being good enough or of being rejected.

In what ways or situations do you act like a chameleon?

Examples: With your boss, at work, with family, in a relationship, in a certain friend group

- _____
- _____

The hardest thing that you're going to face if you're a chameleon is to trust that you're enough. It's in the moment when you reach to blend in that you find the courage to be you and to say what's true for you.

AMY'S TAKEAWAY #4: Follow your inner compass.

If you feel utterly stuck, with zero clue about what direction to turn to, I want you to follow your inner compass. It's always guiding you and pointing toward your true north, which are things that you're curious about or energized by.

You're never ever lost—you just have to read the compass and then start marching in its direction.

Use these questions to find the direction your inner compass is pointing towards:

What excites you?

- _____
- _____
- _____

If you had a free afternoon, how would you spend it?

- _____
- _____
- _____

What things come easily to you?

- _____
- _____
- _____

What topic could you talk about for hours?

- _____
- _____
- _____

In a bookstore, what topics do you naturally gravitate towards?

- _____
- _____
- _____

What kinds of articles do you find yourself drawn to?

- _____
- _____
- _____

When was the last time you felt energized?

- _____
- _____

For more ideas, look at what you wrote in Dan's takeaway number 5.

AMY'S TAKEAWAY #5: Unresolved issues follow you.

If you don't take control of patterns that hold you back, they will follow you everywhere, especially at work.

Here is how to move past patterns that do not serve you:

Step 1: Recognize them.

What is the behavior pattern that you turn to when things don't go as planned?

Examples: Make a scene, have a hissy fit, shut up and go quiet, crack jokes, lie, fight back, cry, guilt trip others, lash out

- _____
- _____

Step 2: Use the science of habits to substitute the old pattern with a new behavior.

What behavior can you do instead of your current pattern?

CURRENT BEHAVIOR

Example: Shut up.

NEW PATTERN

Example: Speak up.

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

Additional thoughts...

COACHING SESSION

CASSANDRA

CASSANDRA'S TAKEAWAY #1: Cassandra's pattern.

If you can change your response to fear, you will take control of your life. By breaking down each person's fear into a clear, three-step process, you can do the same with your own.

Cassandra's fear:

She has two fears. She fears both being abandoned and being physically abused.

Fear triggers this repeated pattern in Cassandra:

Due to her fear of abandonment, she's always preparing for the people in her life to be gone—and trying to push people away in anticipation of them leaving.

And, as a domestic violence survivor, she fears being physically abused—so as a result, she monitors and she nitpicks the people in her life in order to try to control certain behaviors, particularly drinking.

Cassandra's new pattern:

She's stopped nitpicking and has started sharing how she really feels, and that's given her immediate control. She and her fiancé have also swapped out their habit of grabbing alcohol for a cup of chamomile tea.

CASSANDRA'S TAKEAWAY #2: Abuse is not love.

If you have a history of abuse in your past, stop justifying the behavior of your abuser and calling it love.

They may have been doing the best that they could given their own issues and trauma, but it is not love. Please let this be a wake up call and use it to empower you to come up with a new definition of love.

Is there someone in your life, particularly from your childhood, who you wanted love from, but received abuse?

▪

In what way was this person damaged themselves?

▪

The abuse that happened was not, or is not, your fault—ever. And the next time you find yourself thinking that this person loved you, I want you to take on this new mantra:

They were so broken, they were incapable of loving me.

CASSANDRA'S TAKEAWAY #3: PTSD is not just for veterans.

PTSD comes as a result of trauma. And if you have survived trauma, you may suffer from PTSD as well.

PTSD can occur in anyone who has experienced or witnessed trauma, including survivors of:

CHILDHOOD TRAUMA SEXUAL ASSAULT ABUSIVE RELATIONSHIPS
EMOTIONAL, PSYCHOLOGICAL, OR PHYSICAL ABUSE CHILD OF AN ABUSIVE OR ALCOHOLIC PARENT
RAPE WAR TERRORIST INCIDENTS SUDDEN DEATH OF A LOVED ONE

Have you experienced any traumas?

Symptoms of PTSD include:

Re-experiencing the trauma in your mind or dreams

Physiological reactions to reminders of the trauma

Emotional numbness

Difficulty sleeping or concentrating

Feeling easily angered, irritated, or jumpy

Distorted blame of self and others related to the trauma

Persistent fear, horror, anger, guilt, or shame

Unwanted thoughts

Do you display any of these symptoms?

If you suspect that you do, please go see a therapist and ask about EMDR therapy. With the right support and care, PTSD can be managed and treated.

CASSANDRA'S TAKEAWAY #4: You're not a people pleaser if your safety depended on it.

If you mold yourself to a situation in order to be liked and act like a chameleon (think of Amy), this has to do with a fear of judgment and rejection. And for most of us, the solution is to trust that you're enough and speak your truth.

If you're a survivor of abuse, it's a very different situation. You're not "a people pleaser" as Cassandra called herself—you developed patterns in order to survive being a victim of abuse.

If you are a survivor of abuse, what things did you start (or stop) doing in order to stay safe?

Stop calling those things an example of people pleasing. You are a survivor of abuse and it's important that you see a therapist in order to untangle the roots of abuse and release trauma.

CASSANDRA'S TAKEAWAY #5: Remove all emotional landmines in your relationship.

Emotional landmines are a field of things that are between you and the person you're in a relationship with that can explode. For Cassandra, that meant alcohol. And, after having an important conversation with her fiancé about it, their entire relationship has transformed.

What emotional landmines exist for you?

They can be people, places, things, smells, sounds, words, or topics.

How can you have a conversation with your loved ones about what these emotional landmines signify for you?

CASSANDRA'S TAKEAWAY #6: Fear of abandonment will trigger you to want to control how hurt you will be.

With a fear of abandonment, because you fear someone leaving, you brace for impact by preparing for people to leave and pushing them away—and often bringing about the outcome that you want the least.

Oftentimes, people with a fear of abandonment feel that they are not worthy of love or being loved. You may think, “If they loved me, they wouldn’t have left.” In order to move past fear of abandonment issues, you’ve got to do the work to recognize that you are worthy of love.

If you could describe your relationship with YOURSELF in 3 words, what would they be?

When you think of the word “love,” what words come to mind?

When you think of the word “family,” what words come to mind?

List 6 things about you that are amazing and that you love about yourself.

Now, let's create your personal mantra that you can use when you find yourself feeling not worthy of love...

Create your mantra:

Write it on an index card, and place it next to your bed. Each evening and morning, repeat it to yourself.

Select one of these or write your own.

- I am enough just as I am.
- I am strong.
- This is my life, my life belongs to me.
- I am worthy of love.
- I believe in myself.
- I treat myself with love and respect.
- I love myself.
- I am enough, I do enough, I have enough.

Write your own:

CASSANDRA'S TAKEAWAY #7: Judgment comes as a result of hurt.

If you're a judgy person, it's because of an unresolved hurt from your past that's continuing to get triggered. You cast judgments so that you never have to slow down long enough to deal with the hurt.

What things do you judge others on?

Circle the ones that apply to you or write in your own.

APPEARANCE MONEY SMARTS JOB SOCIAL STATUS WEIGHT ACTIONS
PERSONALITY THINGS YOU ARE JEALOUS OF WORDS CLOTHING

Write your own:

Why do you think you place these judgments on others?

What do you judge about yourself?

When you start to judge someone, please think of Cassandra's update from her sister. You just never know what someone else is feeling, thinking, or going through. What's the fastest way to find out? Pick up the phone and have the conversation to find the truth.

YOU

**IT'S TIME TO TAKE WHAT YOU
HAVE LEARNED ABOUT FEAR TO
IDENTIFY YOUR OWN PATTERNS**

THE FIRST TAKEAWAY FOR EACH OF THE 6 GUESTS WAS THE SAME:

Fear triggers you to act in a certain way. And if you can change your response to situations that make you nervous or scare you, then you will change how you think—and as a result your life will change.

You've heard it over and over again—and it's time for you to use this same formula in YOUR life.

Your Fear:

First, you must identify what you're scared of.

What makes you feel afraid or nervous? What are you afraid of?

- _____
- _____
- _____

Fear triggers this repeated pattern in you:

Second, you've got to see the unique way in which you silence yourself or run whenever you feel nervous or afraid, because every time you feel nervous or afraid you do the exact same thing.

Whenever you feel nervous or afraid there is a pattern there. What do you do?

- _____
- _____
- _____

Your new pattern:

Third, you must change your response to fear. That's how you take control of your life.

Here are some examples:

MY OLD PATTERN

Fear triggers me to be silent.

When I'm nervous, I overthink.

Fear makes me isolate.

Fear makes me overwhelmed.

When I'm nervous, I stress eat.

I reach for a drink.

I go online shopping.

I start venting or gossiping.

I binge watch Netflix.

NEW PATTERN I WILL REPLACE IT WITH

I will speak up.

I will take action.

I will reach out to a friend.

I will work on one important thing for 5 minutes.

I will go for a 5 minute walk.

I will reach for a glass of seltzer, or tea.

I will get rid of one thing I own.

I will make a list of 5 things I am grateful for.

I will do 10 minutes of exercise.

You now need to create a new pattern:

MY OLD PATTERN

NEW PATTERN I WILL REPLACE IT WITH

My one action:

As shared at the very end of this audiobook, you can finish listening and do nothing. Don't do that. Instead, pick ONE small brick to help you start moving forward.

The one small change I'm going to make:

Is this something I can do in less than 30 minutes?

Circle one: YES NO

If not, simplify the action into something smaller:

When I'm going to do it:

IF in two days I don't feel like doing this thing, THEN I will

IF in two weeks from now I've already forgotten about everything I wrote in this workbook, THEN I will

NOW, GO TAKE CONTROL OF YOUR LIFE!

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