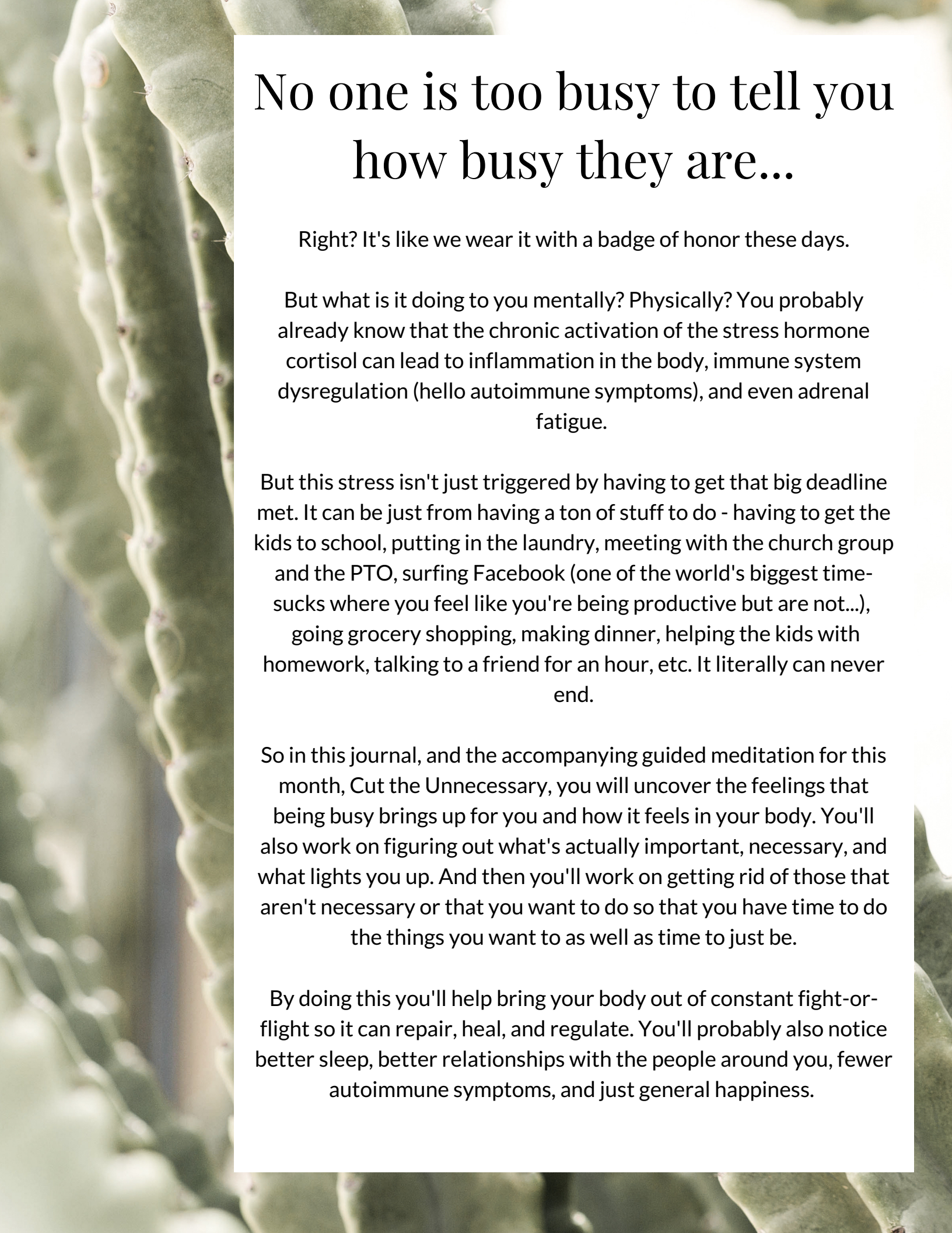


SLOWING LIFE DOWN JOURNAL

HOW YOUR BUSYNESS IS AFFECTING
YOU AND YOUR PERSONALIZED PLAN
TO FIX THAT



THE
AUTOIMMUNE COLLECTIVE



No one is too busy to tell you how busy they are...

Right? It's like we wear it with a badge of honor these days.

But what is it doing to you mentally? Physically? You probably already know that the chronic activation of the stress hormone cortisol can lead to inflammation in the body, immune system dysregulation (hello autoimmune symptoms), and even adrenal fatigue.

But this stress isn't just triggered by having to get that big deadline met. It can be just from having a ton of stuff to do - having to get the kids to school, putting in the laundry, meeting with the church group and the PTO, surfing Facebook (one of the world's biggest time-sucks where you feel like you're being productive but are not...), going grocery shopping, making dinner, helping the kids with homework, talking to a friend for an hour, etc. It literally can never end.

So in this journal, and the accompanying guided meditation for this month, *Cut the Unnecessary*, you will uncover the feelings that being busy brings up for you and how it feels in your body. You'll also work on figuring out what's actually important, necessary, and what lights you up. And then you'll work on getting rid of those that aren't necessary or that you want to do so that you have time to do the things you want to as well as time to just be.

By doing this you'll help bring your body out of constant fight-or-flight so it can repair, heal, and regulate. You'll probably also notice better sleep, better relationships with the people around you, fewer autoimmune symptoms, and just general happiness.

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How do you take care of yourself when you are so busy juggling your job or life and caring for other people at home? You cannot give 100% to others if you don't have 100% to give. Knowing that you have to take care of yourself before you can adequately take care of others is easier said than done.

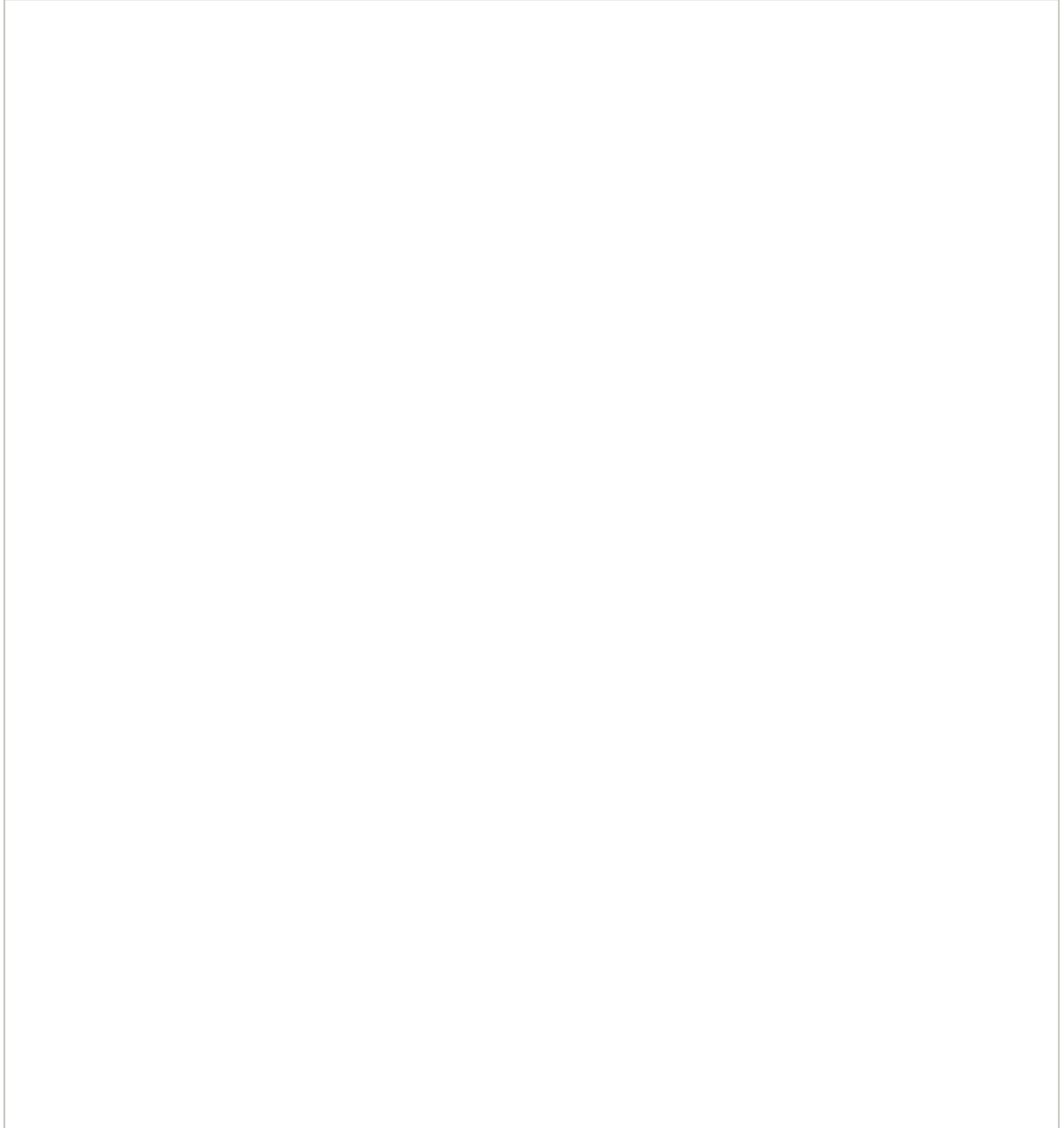
The following questions are to help bring awareness of how busyness feels inside. This is a non-judgmental exercise to elicit honest and open awareness of your feelings. There is no right or wrong response. If you are having a hard time feeling this, do the "Cut the Unnecessary" Meditation first and then come back to this journal.

1. To begin this exercise, think of a typical busy day. Where are you, at work or at home? What are you doing? What time of day is it? Who is with you?

A large, empty rectangular box with a thin black border, intended for the user to write their journal entry in response to the question above.

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2. Now tune in to your body. What do you feel? Are you happy, sad, anxious, calm, energized or tired? Where do you feel it in your body? What does it feel like? Do you have tension in your shoulders, a tightness in your chest, a hitch in your breath, butterflies in your stomach, or do you feel relaxed or something else entirely?

A large, empty rectangular box with a thin black border, intended for the user to write or draw their responses to the prompts above.

Don't try to change the sensations that you feel, just follow them wherever they lead you. Observe these feelings without judgment and just be aware of the feelings and their presence in the moment.

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3. Do you like what you are feeling? Does it scare you? What emotions does this bring up for you?



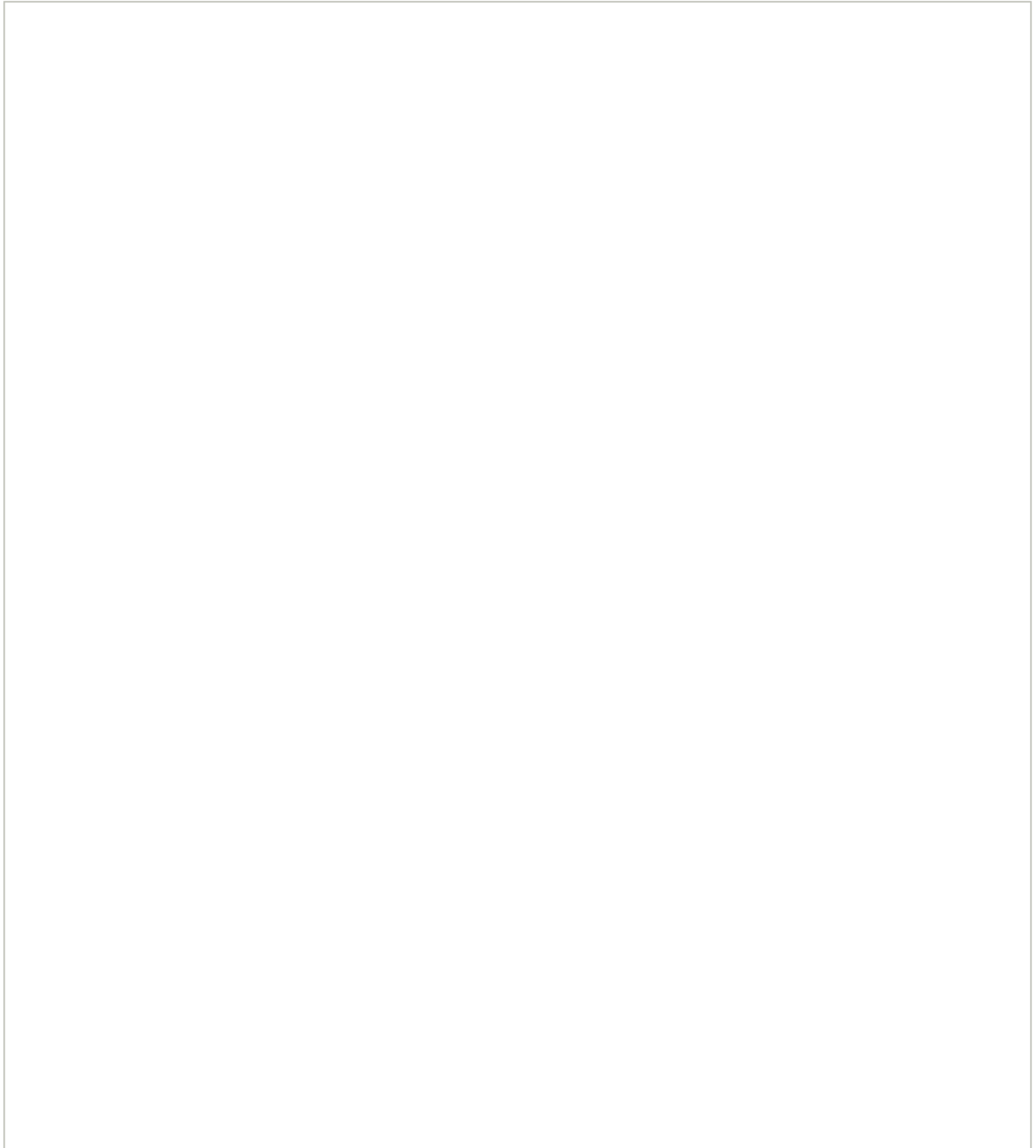
4. Now imagine you don't have ANY of the busyness. That all obligations, tasks, things to do, etc have all been taken care of for you. What emotions does THIS bring up for you?



Sometimes people stay busy as a distraction from loneliness or a feeling of emptiness. In this instance, it is best to take a healing approach and make the hard decision of dealing with the unpleasant emotions rather than avoiding them. .

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5. What are the things you **HAVE** to do each day? These are usually the things that someone will die or be in dire straits if you don't do them. What are the things you **WANT** to do? What are the things you don't need to do? (These often start with "I should")



6. Circle the things that **DO NOT NEED** to be done (and that you don't absolutely love and want to do).

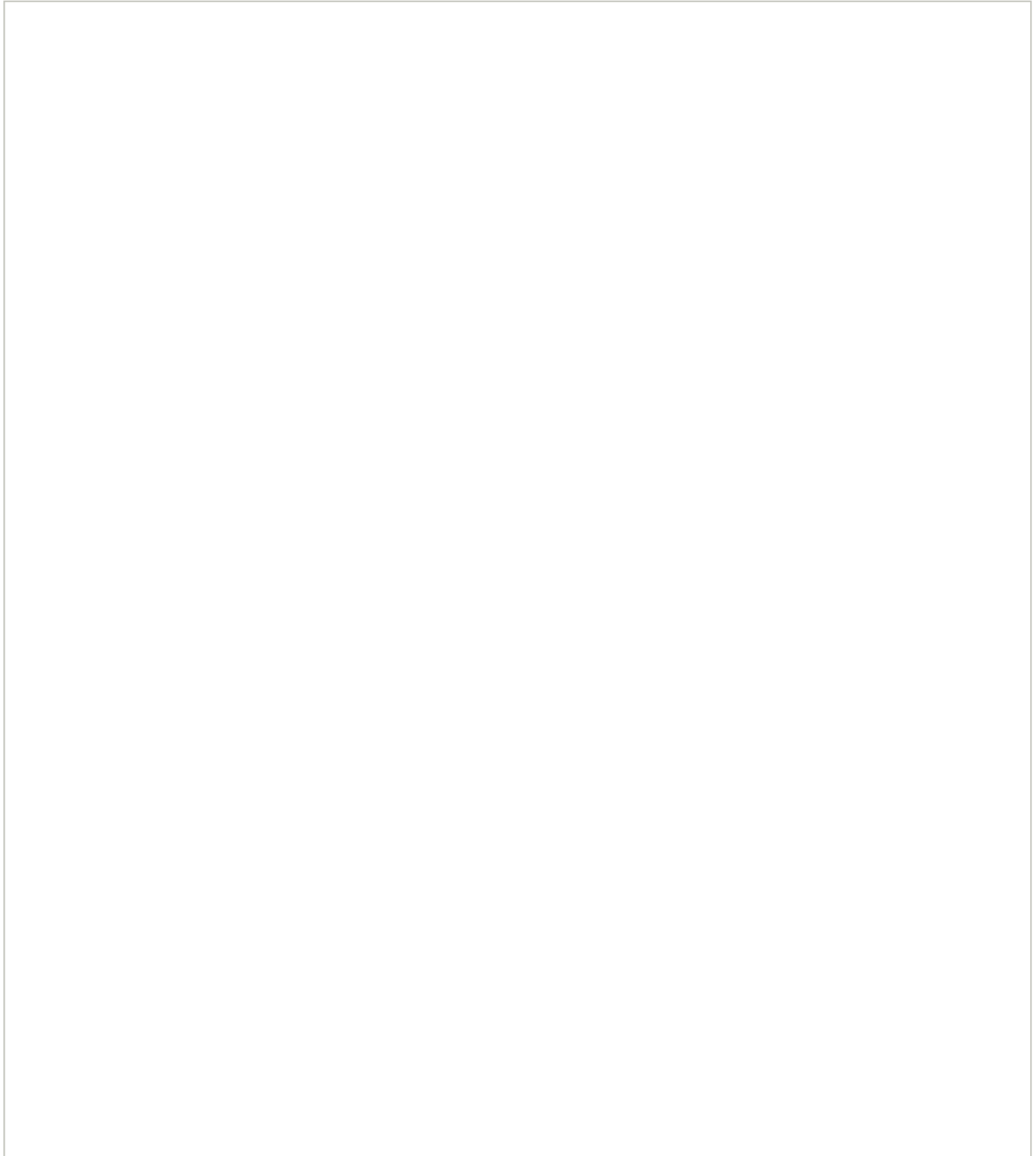
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7. Looking back at the circled items on the previous page, is there a way you can stop doing these? If not, can you delegate them to someone else? Find a different solution? Brainstorm some ideas below. This can include:

- hiring a house cleaner - even if it's just for a few well-used rooms in your house
- only cleaning the well-used rooms yourself frequently and only do the other ones occasionally
- using a grocery delivery service like Instacart
- hiring a personal assistant for a few hours a week at \$15 an hour (they can go to the post office, meal plan, grocery shop for you, help you get organized, do laundry - all sorts of stuff)
- hiring a mother's helper for a few hours a week
- asking a family member or friend for help
- purchasing premade food (like Paleo On the Go) or hiring a personal chef to make a few meals each week
- saying No to new obligations that you don't want to do
- Only doing things on an occasional basis instead of all the time (e.g. volunteering at school once a month vs once a week - you're still helping!).

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10. How will you take what you learned from this forward into your life? Is there a particular item from the last question that you'll work on?



Whatever the reasoning behind your busyness, try to make some time for yourself during each day to listen to your body and what it needs. A short period of meditation or a short walk could be just the thing to help you focus on yourself and reenergize.

"Busyness is not a reason for not getting other things done. It is an excuse for not claiming your true priorities." - Alan Cohen

You can revisit this workbook every time you feel your life getting too busy or you get that feeling of overwhelm.

xo, Michele

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