

# *Simplify Your Life*

## *Without Sacrificing What is Important to You*

### Four Strategies to Help You De-Clutter Your Life, Re-Prioritize, and Free Up Your Blocked Energy & Inspired Creativity

Welcome. This E-book contains 4 Simple Strategies, and embedded within each strategy are specific action steps that are designed purposefully and thoughtfully to help you simplify your life without sacrificing what is important to you.

I have used these strategies with hundreds of coaching clients over the years to help them de-clutter their life, reprioritize, and free up blocked energy and creativity so that they can move more powerfully and purposefully toward their goals.

If you will commit yourself to fully engaging in the strategies, exercises, tips and insights contained in this E-book you will quickly notice a sense of spaciousness accompanied by increased energy, creativity, and inspired action in your life.

As you free up energy that is currently being spent on things that deplete you, don't be surprised if you find yourself dropping into a place of deep peace and relaxation with your Self, your relationships and your life. This spaciousness and clarity will ultimately provide the impetus for powerful forward movement in reaching your goals.

I am excited to be your partner on this journey.



#### **Contents**

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Welcome	1
What's the Purpose?	2
The Elephant	3
How to Use this Book	4 - 5
Benefits of Simplifying	6

#### **4 Strategies**

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Strategy #1	7 - 8
Strategy #2	9 - 10
Strategy #3	11 - 14
Strategy #4	15 - 18
Next steps	19 - 20
Services Offered	19 - 20
About Jennifer	19 - 20

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## What's the Purpose?

- Do you ever wish that you had a clone so that you could accomplish everything on your ever-growing “to-do” list?
- Are you spread too thin in every area of your life, and sometimes feel like you're losing your mind?
- Are you exhausted to the core, frazzled, and not sure anymore what is a priority (because they're all priorities, right?) and downright cranky and resentful most of the time?
- Do you want to continue living like this?

Let's face it. You have too much to do these days. You have so many demands on your time, energy, and resources that you feel pulled in a million different directions. You're probably fueling your body with caffeine and junk food because you don't have time to shop for, or cook, foods that nourish your body, mind and spirit.

You feel like there's always one more thing to do, yet not enough time or enough of you to go around. There's just not enough time in a day, is there? Guess what? If there *were* more time in your day or week you would probably just fill it up with doing more, because that is what you are used to.

The **purpose** of this workbook is to provide you with 4 simple, yet powerful strategies, insights and guidance that I have used over the past 10 years to help my clients stop spinning in circles, stop saying “Yes” out of obligation, and stop feeling guilty, frazzled, and overwhelmed, and help you reduce or eliminate the things that drain you.

The strategies I share will help you reprioritize your life around what is truly important to you, so that you have ample time, energy and resources to focus on cultivating what you truly enjoy.

Simplifying your life provides the space you need to rediscover the authentic voice of your heart and of your Soul. You will become more intentional, more purposeful and powerful, and your entire life will become a clear and direct reflection of your deepest values and desires in life.



“The greatest step towards a life of simplicity is to learn to let go.”

- Steve Maraboli  
*Life, The Truth, and Being Free*

## The African Elephant and Your Excess Luggage

Imagine that you are trekking across the African plains on safari and your source of transportation is not an enclosed Jeep, but an African elephant. As you are loading your luggage onto the elephant's back the safari guide tells you that the elephant, although incredibly strong, cannot carry any more weight. You sheepishly realize that you have brought **far** too much luggage, jam-packed with clothing and other things that you use at home, but that you will never in a million years use out here in the plains of Africa where simplicity is nature's most basic tenet.



Would you yell at the elephant and kick it for being too weak to carry your absurd amount of excess “stuff?” I highly doubt it!

Would you simply accept that the elephant is carrying its maximum load and find another way to transport the rest of your bags? Would you look closely and see the ragged clothing worn by your local safari guide and the rest of the villagers, instantly recognizing that you have far more than you need that easily could be gifted to your guide and hosts, thereby significantly lightening your load and fostering lifelong relationships with your gifts?

If you would not kick the elephant for reaching its maximum carrying capacity, why in the world would you not extend the same kindness, compassion and understanding to yourself when you have reached your maximum carrying capacity? As you work through the exercises in this workbook think of yourself as the elephant that just can't carry anything more.

Life's goal isn't how much you can **do**. It's **be**-ing your most authentic self. Don't berate yourself or compare yourself to anyone else. This is YOUR life. Be kind to yourself throughout this process. Resistance to, or anger with, these exercises is a sign that you have been carrying more than your fair share and that you are beginning to reclaim your power by consciously and intentionally lightening your load.

Many years ago I took a webinar, and the host's wife shared a personal story.

She said she used to take care of everyone else and was depleted at the end of each day, with nothing left for her Self.

A friend recommended she put herself first. She balked. The roof would cave in. The house would be a mess!

Finally, she was empty and had nothing left to give. She tried the friend's suggestion, putting her Self first. At first, her husband and sons challenged her. Although she felt guilty she stood her ground.

She found that when she gave to others first she was depleted. When she put **herself** first she had plenty left over to give to others.

It didn't take long for her husband and two sons to notice that she was different – happy - and they began encouraging her to put her Self first.

**Moral of the story:** When a cup is empty there is nothing for anyone to drink. When a cup is overflowing there is plenty for everyone to drink.



Simplify Your Life Without Sacrificing What is Important to You

## How to Use this Workbook

After years of hearing my clients express that they wished they sometimes had my voice of wisdom or guidance in their back pocket when they felt stuck I decided to offer this E-book.

The strategies in this E-book are simple. Don't mistake simple for easy, because success in this endeavor requires your commitment, focus and attention. They are designed to be used in order, one at a time. Each strategy contains within it several exercises broken down into step-by-step actions. Think of them as stepping stones or building blocks. You must take step one in order to reach the steps beyond.

Take at least one week (or more) to work with each strategy because they will take you deep into the muck that is currently cluttering your life and draining your energy.

You may be tempted to skip some of the exercises within the strategies, or try to be a superstar and work through the exercises faster, or get them all done in one sitting because you are such an efficient person. Don't skip any steps, and don't try to be an efficient superstar.

***Why not, you ask? I have other a gazillion other things to DO today, this week, this month, this life!***

If you skip any of the exercises or try to be an efficient superstar you will cheat yourself out the insights, a-ha's and deep powerful core transformation that will occur.

These strategies have been thoughtfully put together so that you can explore your life, choices and self-talk from perspectives you may not have had before. You will have the opportunity to excavate your thoughts, beliefs, and perceptions of yourself and the world around you that you may not be consciously aware of. But, if you're feeling overwhelmed and spread too thin, those thoughts, beliefs and perceptions are subconsciously driving your conscious outward thoughts, attitudes, behaviors, and the choices that you make every single day of your life.

### Success Tip

Buy yourself a "***Simplify without Sacrificing what is Important to Me***" notebook, and dedicate it solely to the exercises in this workbook.

You may be shocked at some of your answers, so be sure to keep the journal in a safe place away from prying eyes. The exercises are for YOU, so please don't share your insights with others until you have worked through the entire workbook.

"Fundamentally, we are a product of choice, not nature (genes) or nurture (upbringing, environment)."

- Stephen R. Covey  
*The 8th Habit*

**Simplify Your Life Without Sacrificing What is Important to You**

## How to Use This Workbook...continued

As you work through the strategies you will begin to feel that you are a strong, competent, powerful person, capable of great success by defining what is truly important to you, integrating those things into your life and eliminating what (or whom) is not. You may be tempted to minimize or diminish this power. Don't.

Finally, you didn't become overwhelmed and spread too thin overnight either. The overwhelm you are experiencing now has taken years to develop. It happened in creeping increments that you didn't notice until you reached the point where you simply couldn't shift your schedule to take on even one more task.

Simplifying your life is a journey, not a destination. If you try to tackle simplification like a project it will become yet one more item on your ever-growing list of "things to do." This is not a project, it is a process. Don't try to rush through it because if you do, you will not achieve the simplicity, peace and spaciousness that you truly desire. Instead, you will get a Band-Aid, which will eventually fall off and you will be left feeling even more discouraged, resentful and cranky. As I said before, take at least one week to work with each exercise so that you build confidence and momentum as you simplify.

In order to achieve the consistent, measurable results that you desire you must first accept that you deserve to live in a way that is in balance, harmony, and respect. Second, you must commit wholeheartedly to honoring your Self first and foremost from this moment forward, and allow yourself the time and space necessary for the transformation that will ultimately take place by working your way through all of the strategies and exercises contained in this workbook.

Simplifying your life will significantly increase what I call your '**Joy Factor**' ...for the rest of your life. The work you do in this book will transform the way you live your life, opening new doors of freedom, spaciousness, increased energy, creativity, and inspiration, which will pave the way for you to design and live your life from choice – the greatest tool you have.

"I do believe in simplicity. It is astonishing as well as sad, how many trivial affairs even the wisest thinks he must attend to in a day; how singular an affair he thinks he must omit.

When the mathematician would solve a difficult problem, he first frees the equation of all incumbrances [sic] and reduces it to its simplest terms. So simplify the problem of life, distinguish the necessary and the real. Probe the earth to see where your main roots run."

-Henry David Thoreau

**Simplify Your Life Without Sacrificing What is Important to You**

## Benefits of Simplifying Your Life

Simplifying your life will yield tremendous benefits. As you take decisive actions steps to simplify your life it may be handy to have a list to refer back to if you find that changing some of your old “*doing too much habits*” feels overwhelming initially, or if you encounter internal (or external) resistance that makes you feel like giving up and sliding back into “*same-old, same-old.*”

1. Simplifying your life **empowers** you to become clear about your values, what is important to you (and what isn't), what is a priority (and what isn't), what can be delegated, donated, thrown away, reorganized, and what simply needs to vanish out of your life. In short, simplifying your life puts you back into the driver's seat and enables you to take back control of your life.
2. **Decrease stress** – when you simplify your life you eliminate, or at least significantly reduce, the responsibilities, obligatory activities, people, relationships, and activities that stress you out and deplete your energy, giving you the opportunity to focus on what really matters to you and contributes to your ‘**Joy Factor.**’
3. **Save money** – how much money do you spend in a month on things that don't enhance your life or happiness? Is your house, garage or storage unit full of “stuff” you no longer use? Sell it and make money! Or, share your excess by gifting it to those who are in need. When you get rid of “stuff” (and don't replace it the more “stuff” note how you feel. Lighter? Free? Less Worry? Happy?
4. **Enhanced creativity, inspiration, emotional well-being, and mental clarity.** Free up your physical space and watch how your emotional and mental well-being, and creativity and inspiration skyrocket! Eliminating the unnecessary unleashes blocked energy that can be used to create more of what you do want in your life.
5. **Stop feeling guilty** – how much time and energy do you spend doing things you don't really enjoy, but you do them anyway because you don't want to disappoint or hurt anyone? Life is too short to waste your time, energy and resources on things you don't enjoy. Simplifying frees your time and energy to invest in who and what you love!

“With long flowing hair and clothed in cotton, Simplicity strides along with uncomplicated purpose. She notices all the beauty in her environment. When asked what part of town she lives in and what kind of car she drives she laughs loudly. Simplicity always responds the same way. “I live in gratitude and I drive integrity.” The she smiles broadly and as she passes on her way you realize the air has never smelled so sweet. Are those roses I smell?”

From a commissioned art piece hanging on my office wall by Patty (last name unknown), the former owner of Red Mango Art Gallery in Colorado Springs, CO.

Simplify Your Life Without Sacrificing What is Important to You

## Strategy #1: Identify & Define Your Core Values

Most people have a difficult time identifying and defining their values because they are not really clear on what values are.

In a nutshell, a core value is a principle, standard or quality that *you feel* is highly desirable to live by. Every person on the planet has different values. Values are shaped by the worldview of the culture you live in, which includes your family, schools, religious organizations and other institutions that you are / were exposed to. No values are better or worse than others – just different.

Identifying your values and living by them is an incredibly powerful way to change your world and the world around you. However, we are not generally encouraged or even taught how to do this because a person who is able to identify and live by his / her values is one of the happiest, strongest, most successful people you will ever meet. Most of us grew up adopting other people's values, never really stopping to assess whether those adopted values worked for us or not.

I have compiled a list of common values on the following page to assist you in identifying the principles you would like to live your life by. If you resonate strongly with a value I have not listed, please feel free to add it to the list and rank it accordingly.

As you become aware of your core values, you become empowered to make choices that align with your values. You may decide to release attachment to, and engagement with, the relationships and activities that don't align with your values, which frees up your precious life force energy, allowing you to create what you do want in your life. You will also more easily achieve your goals, dreams and aspirations because you will be able to identify whether your actions toward achieving those goals are aligned or mis-aligned with your values.

We will discuss what to do with the information gleaned from the values exercise in each of the strategies in this workbook.

"It's not hard to make decisions when you know what your values are."

– Roy Disney

**Simplify Your Life Without Sacrificing What is Important to You**

## Do You Walk the Talk?

Please rate each value on a scale of 1-10 based on its importance in your life. Then rate each value on a scale of 1-10 based on how well you live each value, i.e. "walk the talk."

1= not important and 10 = very important

Value	Value Rating (1 – 10)	Action Rating (1 – 10)
Abundance	_____	_____
Accomplishment	_____	_____
Achievement	_____	_____
Adventure	_____	_____
Altruism	_____	_____
Autonomy	_____	_____
Beauty	_____	_____
Clarity	_____	_____
Commitment	_____	_____
Communication	_____	_____
Community	_____	_____
Connecting to Others	_____	_____
Creativity	_____	_____
Emotional Health	_____	_____
Environment	_____	_____
Excellence	_____	_____
Family	_____	_____
Flexibility	_____	_____
Freedom	_____	_____
Friendship	_____	_____
Fun	_____	_____
Generosity	_____	_____
Holistic Living	_____	_____
Honesty	_____	_____
Humor	_____	_____
Integrity	_____	_____
Intimacy	_____	_____
Joy	_____	_____
Leadership	_____	_____
Love	_____	_____
Loyalty	_____	_____
Nature	_____	_____
Openness	_____	_____
Orderliness	_____	_____
Personal Growth	_____	_____
Partnership	_____	_____
Physical Appearance	_____	_____
Power	_____	_____
Privacy	_____	_____
Professionalism	_____	_____
Recognition	_____	_____
Respect	_____	_____
Romance	_____	_____
Safety	_____	_____
Self-Care	_____	_____
Self-Expression	_____	_____
Self-Mastery	_____	_____
Self-Realization	_____	_____
Sensuality	_____	_____
Service	_____	_____
Spirituality	_____	_____
Trust	_____	_____
Truth	_____	_____
Walking the Talk	_____	_____



## *Strategy #2: Where is Your Attention?*

Are you aware that your thoughts create your reality? This is not just a metaphysical mystical New Age 'woo-woo' idea.

Within your brain stem is something called the Reticular Activating System (RAS), which receives sensory information (taste, touch, smell, pain, pressure, heat, cold, etc.) from your environment, experiences, perceptions and thoughts. Your RAS then communicates with both your subconscious mind and the rest of your brain and nervous system about the information it has received, telling them how to respond to the sensory information it has received.

The RAS is a very complex collection of neurons, which serve as a point of convergence for signals from the external stimulation received through your senses and from interior environment (hormones, chemical reactions, nervous system responses, etc.). In other words, the RAS is the part of your brain where the world outside of you, and your thoughts and feelings from "inside" of you, meet.

### **How Your RAS Creates Your Reality**

When you imagine a goal and visualize taking the steps necessary to attain that goal, your RAS takes over and literally guides you to do whatever is necessary to achieve your desired result(s). It looks for proof of what you believe to be real. Professional athletes have figured out how to use the RAS to significantly improve athletic performance by focusing their attention on the specific outcome(s) that they desire.

One of the myriad functions of the RAS is that it helps your brain focus, prioritize, and control what is in the "mind's eye" at any given point in time. It tends to filter out what doesn't seem to be important, and only allows you to experience what you accept as reality. Therefore, it is vitally important to examine your values, beliefs, assumptions, perceptions and especially to pay strict attention to your thoughts and inner self-talk. What you believe, imagine, or think about will be produced in your reality - both positive AND negative.

"Tell me to what you pay attention and I will tell you who you are."

- Jose Ortega y Gasset

**Simplify Your Life Without Sacrificing What is Important to You**

## Strategy #2: Where is Your Attention? ...continued

The world you see and experience has been created by your subconscious thoughts, beliefs and self-talk.

Once you accept this fact and take responsibility for your thoughts, you will quickly see the connection between your thoughts and your experiences. If you ask yourself, “*How did I contribute to creating this situation?*,” you can track back and easily see, “*Oh yes, I remember having a fear about that,*” or “*I remember telling myself I was being selfish for not taking on that project so I said ‘Yes’ out of guilt and now I feel resentful.*”

### Directions:

1. Keep a thought journal and closely examine your thoughts and inner self-talk. Do you hear yourself thinking positive uplifting thoughts? Or, do you hear a constant barrage of negative, disparaging, limiting or even hateful self-talk? What do you tell yourself about yourself? About your life?
2. Carry your “thought journal” with you everywhere you go for an entire week. Every single time you have a negative thought, perception, assumption, limiting belief or negative self-talk write it down. Having a visual image of what normally goes unnoticed in your mind will most likely shock you. Pay close attention to “*I can’t, I don’t have, I’m sick and tired, I hate*” and other limiting phrases.
3. For every negative thought, perception, assumption, limiting belief or negative self-talk immediately replace it with three positive alternatives to create a shift in your internal language patterns. When you find yourself having a negative thought, immediately replace it with the positive alternatives. This reprograms your brain, neural pathways and Reticular Activating System.

This exercise will challenge you more than you know. It will also change your life – in profound ways. Think of your thoughts like a ship. A course correction of one degree over time makes a profound difference in your overall destination.

“The subconscious mind is actively maneuvering in the background to select the activities that will move you closest to the reality that is most consistent with your deeper self-concept. So to achieve wealth, power, fame, romance or peace, you must engage in the powerful task of shifting your subconscious.”

- Kevin Michel  
*Subconscious Mind Power*

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## Strategy #3: Identify Your Energy Vampires

Do you have people in your life who trample your boundaries or make you feel as though you are unworthy, stupid, unloved, offended, fearful, or even feeling ill after you spend time with them?

I call these people “energy vampires” – because they suck the life out of you. They only “take” from you. They never reciprocate favors, listen to you, or lend a hand when you need help. These relationships are lopsided and if you want to simplify your life you **must** identify these people, see them for who and what they are, and release them from your life.

There are several types of “energy vampires,” and just like their mythical counterparts they are often disguised as human – they can be family members, friends, clients, colleagues, teachers, neighbors, and even lovers. Here are some examples so you know what you’re dealing with...

- *Crazy-makers* and *drama queens* have you spinning in maddening circles around their latest (and greatest) drama.
- *Blamers* never accepting any responsibility for their circumstances. It’s **always** someone else’s fault.
- *Gossipers* and *back stabbers* – you know they’re also talking about you behind your back when you’re not around, right?
- *Jealous Janes* and *Jealous Johns* - envy everyone else.
- *Fun haters* – need I say more?
- *Bullies* trample everyone around them to elevate their egos.
- *Guilt trippers* – these people use guilt and shame to get you to do what they want.
- *Eeyores* (Pooh & Piglet’s pessimistic donkey friend).
- Remember Dapper Dan from Saturday Night Live? *Whiners* complain about *everything*.
- *Short-temperers* – get out of their way.
- *Stingers & Scorpions* – you never know when they’ll attack.
- *Insecure Ike’s* and *Ina’s* constantly put others down to feel better about their own (perceived) inadequacies & insecurities.
- The list goes on...

“Surround yourself only with people who are going to lift you higher.”

-Oprah Winfrey

“You are the average of the five people you spend the most time with.”

Jim Rohn

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### Strategy #3: Identify Your Energy Vampires...continued

When clients want to work on time management because they feel “*spread too thin*” or “*have more to do than I have time*” there are always one or two “energy vampires” lurking in the shadows of their life, demanding, coercing and manipulating the person into giving far more of their time, energy and resources than s/he could reasonably give without creating a huge imbalance in other areas of their life.

You probably know a few “energy vampires” and may even care about them, too. You are used to their well-meaning protests of love and care for you when they attempt to wrangle you into their next project that they simply “*cannot do*” without your help. That makes it hard to say “*No*” or ditch these energy-suckers for good.

If you are reading this and nodding your head as you recognize the behavior of these people for what it is, you are tolerating “energy vampirism.” You may even pride yourself on being able to get along with everybody, to “*suck it up*” and “*be the bigger person.*” Perhaps you are afraid to speak up and draw a boundary (or get a backbone) because it has created endless sob fests and/or guilt attacks in the past.

The following exercise may seem like a daunting task, especially if you’re a busy executive and/or you’re well-connected and know lots of people. However, I assure you it is well worth it to comb through your relationships to uncover the people in your life who literally suck every ounce of energy out of you.

Remember, your notebook is private, so your answers won’t be seen by anyone but you. Your honesty will help you identify the relationships that feed and nourish you, as well as provide the necessary insight to bring health, harmony and balance to some that need a little bit of bolstering or re-negotiating, and help you clearly identify those that need to be weeded out and removed from your life.

“I just do not hang around anybody that I don’t want to be with. Period. For me, that’s been a blessing, and I can stay positive. I hang around people who are happy, who are growing, who want to learn, who don’t mind saying sorry or thank you...and [are] having a fun time.”

- John Assaraf

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### *Strategy #3: Identify Your Energy Vampires...continued*

**Directions:** This Strategy will probably take you more than one week to work through. Take your time with it. You will gain tremendous value by giving yourself the time to do this strategy well.

1. Each day for one week write down the names of the people you interact with and the context of the relationship – regardless of whether you interact via phone, text, IM, social media, e-mail, or in person. This includes your children, siblings, relatives, colleagues, supervisors, employees, any medical professionals you see, childcare providers, the concierge at your apartment, your contractors or plumber, bus or drivers, your kids' teachers, etc.
2. Next to each name write down how often you interact – is it daily, weekly, monthly, or infrequently?
3. On a scale of 1-10 with “1” representing “very little” and “10” representing “energy vampire” go through your list of people and next to each name write the number that represents how much or how little that person drains your energy. Don't censor yourself if you want to place a “10” next to someone whom you “should” feel close to.
4. Circle or highlight the names of the people that you listed as “7” and higher. Are you shocked at whose names you circled or highlighted? Wondering if you did this exercise correctly? Don't second-guess yourself and don't try to talk yourself out of the answers you provided.
5. Refer back to your values list. Place a numerical value (1-10 with 1 = low value and 10 = very high value) of how important this relationship is for **you** to maintain (not whether it's important for the other person).
6. For every person you circled or highlighted as “7” or higher with a corresponding low value it is imperative for your mental, emotional and physical health that you take immediate steps to weed this person from your life. This is simple, but not an easy undertaking because the energy vampire is going to use every tactic s/he knows to keep you playing their game.
7. Unfriending doesn't just happen on Facebook. Stop interacting with the people who are “7” and over your list. If they happen to be a colleague or supervisor you will need another strategy. If you need additional help with this, please contact me for professional coaching.

**Example** (made up person): John, 2. brother, only interact once a year at Thanksgiving (thank God!) 3. At least a 9, maybe 10 – all he does is complain and put everyone else down. 4. Highlighted his name in yellow. 5. Value = 1 (I secretly wish I never saw him again, he's such a pig!) 6. And 7. – self-explanatory

**Simplify Your Life Without Sacrificing What is Important to You**

## *Strategy #3: Identify Your Energy Vampires...continued*

### **How to weed “energy vampires” from your life.**

1. You probably don't remember the power you felt when you began asserting the word, “No” around the age of 2, but if you have spent any time around 2-year olds you are well-aware that they gleefully shout “No” (in a delighted high-pitched-pierce-your-eardrums squeal) as a way to begin asserting their separation and independence from mom and dad. You must do the same.

Next time one of your identified “energy vampires” asks you for something – even a seemingly innocuous favor you must say “No.” This will feel uncomfortable. Do it anyway.

2. Be prepared for the backlash. You are going to get a boatload of guilt, shame and negative energy heaped on you when you say “No.” It might help you to write out your response on a sheet of paper ahead of time (especially good for phone calls) and read it aloud to practice. Saying “No” is easy. The emotional backlash can be brutal. Repeat the word “No” aloud - often - until you get the hang of saying it without feeling guilty. You might even want to practice singing it, squealing it, shouting it, growling it, and whispering it so that you are well-versed in all its subtle nuances.
3. Know in advance that the “energy vampires” are going to try to break down your defenses. You will sound like a broken record, but it is vital that you repeat “No” until they stop making demands on your time.
4. Stand your ground. You don't owe anyone an explanation. You owe it to yourself to reclaim your power and stop spending time with people who don't respect you or your boundaries.
5. After a while you may develop amnesia and forget how the “energy vampires” made you feel. If you start to give in, feel wishy-washy, or guilty for making them “feel bad” refer to your list and force yourself to remember how you felt every time this person sucked the life out of you. Is it really worth it to let them back in?

## Strategy #4 – The Power to Choose

There are so many things to understand in your lifetime, aren't there? I think one of the biggest learning opportunities you will ever face is to understand the role Choice plays in your life, which is crucial for your personal development and spiritual maturity.

Choice and decision are not the same thing. When you go out to eat at a restaurant you have choices to make, including who to go with (if anyone), where to sit, what to order, and how much of a gratuity to leave your Server. Once you select what you want you have then made a decision.

To use Choice correctly you must first understand that it is a tool available to you (yes, it may be buried under some old beliefs or fears, but trust me - it's in your possession...*somewhere*). You may have grown up in a household where you were told Choice was not something that belonged to you, and possibly even made to feel guilty if you so much as inquired about it. I'm willing to wager a bet that you probably had less than stellar role models growing up to teach you how to use Choice responsibly (the ability to respond), with wisdom, discernment, compassion, trust and power.

Like all tools Choice is something you must learn how to use correctly. Lastly, and probably most importantly, it's important to remember that you have been granted the gift of free will - which means that you are free to choose whatever you desire, without limit and without exception.

If you create something and then decide it's not what you want after all you are free to choose again, and again, and again. Have you ever heard someone say, "*I **had** to do such and such, I didn't have a choice?*"

They may have abdicated Choice out of fear of making the wrong decision, or they may truly believe they didn't have a Choice, which made them feel powerless and caused them to react (fear-based) to the circumstances and situations in their lives rather than respond (love based). Understanding that you actually **do** have Choice puts you back in the driver's seat, and in control of your life.

"Excellence is never an accident. It is always the result of high intention, sincere effort, and intelligent execution; it represents the wise choice of many alternatives – choice, not chance, determines your destiny."

- Aristotle

Simplify Your Life Without Sacrificing What is Important to You

## Strategy #4 – The Power to Choose ...continued

Are you aware that every single Choice you make has the ability to alter the course / direction of your life? Even the seemingly mundane "unimportant" Choices, are, in fact, powerful in both the subtle and the overt ways they steer your life.

Every Choice yields opportunities that may not have been available to you before, opening certain doors (and windows), while closing others.

### Directions:

1. Write down the following categories on a piece of paper:
  - Family / parenting
  - Personal Development
  - Spiritual Fulfillment
  - Fun & Enjoyment
  - Social Relationships
  - Intimate Relationships
  - Health
  - Finances
  - Career
  - Volunteer
  - Obligation
2. Go through your calendar and write down every activity you plan to participate in this month. If you have children this list includes shuffling the kids to school, helping them with homework, fixing meals, driving them to activities and appointments, etc. If you don't have children your list includes work and volunteer activities, social activities, household responsibilities, appointments – all of it.
3. Do you notice any correlation between the "energy vampires" and the activities that drain you?
4. Next to each activity indicate what category that activity falls into and how frequently you participate in it (daily, weekly, monthly, infrequently).

"A simple life is not seeing how little we can get by with – that's poverty – but how efficiently we can put first things first... When you're clear about your purpose and your priorities, you can painlessly discard whatever does not support these, whether it's clutter in your cabinets or commitments on your calendar. (148)"

- Victoria Moran  
*Lit From Within: Tending  
Your Soul for Lifelong  
Beauty*

**Simplify Your Life Without Sacrificing What is Important to You**



## *Strategy #4 – The Power to Choose ...continued*

5. Rank each activity according to how important it is to you. 1 = low priority, 10 = MUST.
6. For each activity that you are involved in with a low priority, ask yourself whether you want to continue being involved in it. If not, make a firm decision of when you plan to stop participating in this activity, inform others (remember, you don't owe anyone an explanation, but if you feel like sharing 'why' you certainly are free to do so), and then stick to your decision.
7. For the activities you choose to remain involved in, ask yourself "Can this be delegated or shared?" If you're overwhelmed you are more than likely taking on projects that can easily be delegated or shared, but you may be hesitant to do so. Maybe you do it better or more efficiently than others. Maybe you've asked for help in the past and have been let down. If you have taken on responsibilities, projects or tasks because you're better at them than others are you are draining your energy AND simultaneously not allowing others to develop skills and expertise that they could develop if you would allow them to share in the responsibilities. Secondly, if you have asked for help in the past and have been disappointed or let down, you are allowing others to continue this pattern by continuing to take on the project without establishing consequences for NOT helping. If the project is low on your list of priorities and can be delegated or shared, let go. Ask for help. Give others the opportunity to develop the skills you already have.
8. For the tasks that are left that are also high priority, or that cannot be delegated or shared, on a scale of 1-10 with "1" representing "very little" and "10" equaling "energy drain" go through your list and next to each activity write the number that represents how much or how little that activity drains your energy. Don't censor your response if you feel yourself wanting to write a "10" next to an activity that you 'think' you enjoy.
9. Refer back to your values list. Place a numerical value (1-10 with 1 = low value and 10 = very high value) of how important each of these activities are for you to continue giving your time and energy to.
10. Circle or highlight the activities that you listed as "7" and higher with a corresponding low value ranking. Are you shocked at how you spend your time? Do you see how much time you spend on things that you don't really enjoy, which depletes you, makes you tired and cranky and resentful, and doesn't allow you to focus on what you do enjoy?

**Simplify Your Life Without Sacrificing What is Important to You**

## *Strategy #4 – The Power to Choose ...continued*

11. For every activity you circled or highlighted as “7” or higher with a corresponding low value it is imperative for your mental, emotional and physical health that you take immediate steps to stop giving any time or energy to this activity.
  12. By now, you are well-practiced in the high art of saying, “No.” You now get to say it to activities that are of low importance and low value to your life.
  13. Know in advance that the people you shared these activities with may take your “No” as a “Maybe” or perhaps not take you seriously. They will try to undermine your resolve, perhaps even try to guilt you into saying “Yes.” Done properly, you will sound like a broken record, repeating “No” until they eventually get it and stop trying to goad you into changing your mind.
  14. Stand your ground. You don’t owe anyone an explanation. You owe it to yourself to stop spending your time participating in activities that don’t contribute to what I call your “Joy Factor.”
  15. After a while you may develop amnesia and only remember the things you enjoyed about the activities you eliminated. This is normal. If you start to backslide or feel tempted to give it a second chance refer to your list and remember how much the activity in question drained you. Is it worth it to keep doing it? Wouldn’t you rather apply your re-discovered energy, creativity, inspiration and happiness toward things that make you feel alive and joyful? I thought so.
- Note, several of the directions in this strategy mirror those in the previous strategy. Life is often simpler than we make it. Use strategies that work.

## Next Steps

If you have diligently worked through the strategies in this workbook you are probably beginning to notice some pretty big shifts in your life. Pat yourself on the back. Validate your successes.

If you start to feel overwhelmed or find yourself trying to work through the strategies faster or taking on one too many things at a time, slow down. Baby steps. Small actions done consistently over time will yield amazing results.

After experiencing a few successes in simplifying your life you may be tempted to stop using these tools or revert back to your old ways. Remember, simplifying is a journey, not a destination. Stick with it.

If you want or need additional support in simplifying your life – or if you find that working through this E-book helped you identify this relates other areas of your life that you would like to shift - I am here to support you in whatever way I can. Please [contact](#) me to further discuss.

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I look forward to being your partner in reclaiming your power and restructuring your life.

Namasté,  
*Jennifer*



Jennifer Britt is a facilitator of conscious personal transformation, sharing a wealth of experience from nearly 20 years of service in the fields of massage therapy, integrative bodywork & intuitive consulting, combined with her experience as a Professional Coach, Interfaith Minister, Speaker and Author, which allows her to guide you into your fullest possibility and potential.

**Simplify Your Life Without Sacrificing What is Important to You**

Illuminating your Soul's Path & Purpose, along with the major themes & responsibilities for your life

Empowering you to heal, transform and restructure any aspect of your life & take decisive action steps in conscious co-creative partnership with your Soul's BluePrint

**Health**  
**Intimate and Social Relationships**  
**Family and Parenting**  
**Personal & Intimate Relationships**  
**Time Management**  
**Work / Life Balance**  
**Career Success**  
**Authentic Communication**  
**Leadership Potential**  
**Financial Health**  
**Joy, Play Personal Development**  
**Spiritual Fulfillment & Maturity**

No matter where you are on your journey, the road ahead is filled with possibility, potential and success.

Working with Jennifer is an investment in your Self, your personal development and your success for the rest of your life.

Jennifer will hold your highest vision and potential for you to step into and she will challenge you to grow beyond what you think is possible. When you fully commit to the process you can expect to see powerful, consistent, measurable results very quickly.

Ready to get started?  
[Contact Jennifer](#) for a **Complimentary 15-minute Strategy Consultation.**

## Services Offered

- Audio downloads
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- Professional life purpose mentoring
- Expert intuition development mentoring
- Private half-day, full-day or weekend intensives
- Workshops and Group retreats
- 15-Minute "laser" coaching sessions (issue-specific)
- Various assessments & supporting materials
- Between session "home play" assignments that are thoughtfully put together specific to your needs (designed to help you make powerful changes and maintain momentum to keep you moving forward)
- Private e-mail access and phone support reserved just for private clients



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