# Take 5! Self-Reg Asset-Building

# **Take 5! for Our Kids**

Creating the Social-Emotional Health that All Young Folks Need (and we do too!)

Tam Lundy, PhD

Take 5! Institute

SELF-REG ASSET-BUILDING





#### SELF-REG ASSET-BUILDING FOR YOUTH

# TAKE 5!

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#### **5 SELF-REG ASSET BASICS**



BE HERE - Mindful Awareness Assets

BE WITH - Interpersonal Effectiveness Assets

BE CALM - Emotion Regulation Assets

BE STRONG - Resilience & Thriving Assets

BE CHANGE - Connectedness & Contribution Assets

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# SELF-REG ASSETS: EVERYONE NEEDS A HANDFUL

Self-reg assets are building blocks for thriving growing our capacity for mental wellness, learning, healthy relationships and lifelong development.

The more assets a young person has, the more chances that he or she will thrive ... even in difficult circumstances - Search Institute

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#### SELF-REG ASSET-BUILDING PRINCIPLES

- 1. Inclusive: All kids, not just some kids.
- $\textbf{2. Youth-empowering:} \ \mathsf{As \ kids \ grow \ skills, \ the \ need \ for \ adult \ intervention \ decreases.}$
- $\textbf{3. Strengths-based:} \ \textbf{Starting with current strengths, growing new ones.}$
- 4. Nudges healthy development: Focusing on potentials, not just problems.
- Engages the community: Attention to strengthening self-reg assets in kids, the adults that support them, and the social & cultural surround.

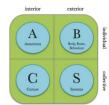
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#### SELF-REG MADE SIMPLE ... 1, 2, 3

- 1. Know the assets: I can name the assets, and know how they make me feel in my body, my mind & my connections with others.
- 2. Grow the assets: I'm growing my self-reg strengths by practicing a little each day. More and more I can say that I'm in charge of my emotions, my thoughts, my behaviours.
- 3. Flow the assets: I can 'be self-reg' more often than not. I can feel the flow.

  And I help others grow their own handful of self-reg assets.



#### SELF-REG ABC'S: ACTION + TRACTION

Take 51 is an integrative approach to self-reg. Evidence shows that our efforts are most effective & sustainable when we strengthen self-reg assets in people + organizations + communities.

Graphic adapted from Lisa Chacon's ABC'S of Social Change

# Self-Reg Assets: Everyone Needs a Handful

The more assets a young person has, the more chances that he or she will thrive ... even in difficult circumstances. - Search Institute

Self-reg assets are building blocks for thriving – growing our capacity for mental wellness, learning, healthy relationships and lifelong development.

The basic idea is simple: everyone needs self-reg assets. And everyone can be an asset-builder.

How to support young folks to thrive? We can help them acquire a handful of self-reg assets. The more assets they have in their hand, the greater the capacity to BE HERE, BE WITH, BE CALM, BE STRONG and BE CHANGE.

Take 5! is a practical asset-oriented framework for building self-regulation capacities in children and youth. It's a strengths-based approach that integrates five essential building blocks for self-regulation:

- Mindful Awareness Assets
- Interpersonal Effectiveness Assets
- Emotion Regulation Assets
- Resilience & Thriving Assets
- Connectedness & Contribution Assets

The Take 5! framework offers a practical scaffolding for building self-reg assets, and will be of particular interest to professionals working with young people in a variety of contexts, including educators and school counselors, child and youth workers, mental health professionals, and social service providers. The framework includes factors that are known to be therapeutic, while fostering resilience and healthy development in *all* young people, including youth-at-risk.

The Take 5! framework takes on a life of its own when children and youth are actively engaged. And the high-five gesture is one that young people intuitively understand. It's a hands-on way of connecting, supporting, and celebrating, and is often initiated with the words "give me five!" By applying the high-five metaphor to the building of self-reg assets, kids acknowledge that they can not only grow their own assets, but also contribute to the assets of others. When our kids Take 5!, everyone wins.



Tam Lundy, PhD Take 5! Institute www.take5selfreg.com

# **Self-Reg Asset-Building: Foundational Principles**

#### 1. Inclusive: Building assets in all kids, not just some kids.

It's true that some kids need more self-reg support than others. But it's also true that *all* kids benefit when learning & practice is a regular part of classroom activity. Everyone has some areas in which their skills are lagging – neurotypical and non-typical kids alike. When self-reg asset-building is just part of the everyday classroom, everyone benefits.

#### 2. Child- & Youth-empowering

The ability to self-regulate is a potent form of empowerment. It's the ability to shape one's own experiences, to step up to life's potentials, and to navigate life's challenges moment to moment. Growing their self-reg capacities, young people can be in charge of their thoughts, emotions, impulses & behaviours, as well as their engagement in social interactions. And as kids grow more self-reg skills, the need for adult intervention decreases.

#### 3. Strengths-based

Take 5! promotes assets that are known to generate health, well-being and thriving. In other words, it's salutogenic. While it's important to identify the gaps, or deficits, in an individual's ability to self-regulate, it's also important to acknowledge current and growing strengths, and offer supportive scaffolding as new capacities are explored and developed.

All kids have strengths – let's optimize them. And, yes, there are gaps – let's help to bridge them.

#### 4. Nudges healthy development

An essential human capacity, self-regulation is key to healthy development. Humans are born with an innate drive to thrive and, in supportive conditions, development continues throughout life. With that developmental journey in mind, self-reg asset-building supports young people to meet life's challenges *and* rise to life's potentials. With self-reg *savvy*, young folks learn that they have power over the ways they respond to life in every situation ... even the challenging parts. And these capacities can last a lifetime.

#### 5. Engages the community

Kids do better when the community is actively engaged in asset-building.<sup>2</sup> And, when it comes to self-regulation, everyone has something to contribute; everyone's an asset-builder. Professionals, certainly. But, also, parents, grandparents, aunts & uncles, coaches, and the neighbour down the street. And, of course, young people themselves.

When communities come together – singing from the same songsheet, so to speak – self-reg asset-building becomes part of our culture; it's just the way we do things around here. This doesn't mean developing costly new programs ... rather, it means getting the community involved in "knowing, growing, and flowing" the assets that are known to boost learning, mental health & well-being, social engagement and lifelong thriving.

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Salutogenic means 'health-generating.' With a salutogenic orientation, we optimize those conditions that promote higher levels of health and well-being – in people, and in systems.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> See, for example, an abundance of research from Search Institute: www.search-institute.org

# Self-Reg Made Simple ... 1, 2, 3

- 1. **Know the assets:** I can name the assets, and know how they make me feel in my body, my mind & my connections with others.
- 2. **Grow the assets:** I'm developing my self-reg strengths by practicing a little each day. More and more I can say that I'm in charge of my emotions, my thoughts, my behaviors.
- 3. Flow the assets: I can 'be self-reg' more often than not. I can feel the flow. And I help others grow their own handful of assets.

#### **Knowing the assets**

Self-reg asset-building supports kids to grow their awareness skills as well as their action skills.

When it comes to self-regulation, awareness comes first, followed by mindful action.<sup>3</sup> The young person is aware of how she feels in the moment, and how she'd *prefer* to feel. She can then form an intention to BE HERE, BE WITH, BE CALM, BE STRONG and/or BE CHANGE. And she can choose to use her self-reg skills to get there. But it all begins with awareness.



#### **Growing the assets**

Self-reg asset-building equips kids with powerful tools to prevent problems, *and* to unleash their potential. When kids can lay claim to lots of self-reg assets, learning, relationships, mental wellness and healthy development are optimized.

Neuroscience shows that the more we practice a skill, the more it's 'on line' and available even when the going gets rough. With self-reg it's not just the brain that's being rewired, however, but the mind as well. In fact, when it comes to self-reg strengths-building, it's the mind that flexes most of the muscle. The more we practice and build those muscles, the more the mind can help the brain and body to self-regulate.

So we needn't wait until problems arise; the best time to begin growing self-reg assets is now.

Tam Lundy, PhD

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> A large body of research shows that asset-building is most effective and sustainable when kids can name the assets they're hoping to grow, and not just the problems that need to be solved. See, for example, Search Institute's work on Developmental Asset Building.

#### Flowing the assets

#### Self-reg and flow

Really, self-reg is all about flow. When humans self-regulate, we experience a harmonious flow of energy and information ... in mind and body, and within our relationships with others. All of our parts – thoughts, feelings, breath, senses, movements, communication - flowing freely, integrated and in synch.

Integration is the cornerstone of self-regulation. For neuroscientist Dan Siegel, it's integration that creates harmony. Integration, he explains, means "linking differentiated parts into a functional whole." In other words, when I'm self-regulated, I'm self-integrated.

Dysregulation, on the other hand, is a sign of stuckness, or impeded flow. And when flow is blocked, problems arise, including learning problems, mental health problems, relationship problems – even arrested development.

When my mind, body and relationships are not in flow, things can quickly go sideways.<sup>5</sup> I can't sit still. I'm breathing too fast. My muscles are tense. My limbs are shaky. My stomach's upset. I get angry easily. I feel like crying. I worry about things. I get scared. I can't focus. And it's not much fun.

Flow creates the conditions for flourishing. So how do we create more flow in kids, classrooms and communities?

#### Me and We: Two ways to flow the assets:

#### **Self-reg Assets and Me**

When any new skill is learned, at first it's hit and miss. But then we reach a tipping point, when we can access that skill with greater consistency. And eventually that new skill becomes our 'go to.'

That's the way it is with self-reg skills. With lots of practice. I can 'be self-reg' more often than not. I now have skills, for example, that let me BE HERE, BE WITH, BE CALM, BE STRONG and BE CHANGE – at least most of the time. Neuroplasticity has done its job, and self-reg is becoming my 'new normal'.

#### Self-reg Assets and We

With lots of opportunity to practice, all kids can grow their own handful of self-reg assets. And they can help other kids to grow their own handful of assets. From youngest to oldest, we understand that everyone benefits when each person has access to lots of self-reg assets. Educators can help. So can parents. In fact, everyone in a young person's life can play a positive role as a self-reg assetbuilder.

- Start anywhere, with any of the assets. To open the conversation, you might invite kids to 'take a selfie.' What are their self-reg strengths? What are the challenges? And which assets will, with lots of practice, give a healthy boost to their self-reg capacities?
- Make the learning fit the moment. Or the curriculum. The bottom line is practice. And
  integrating self-reg asset-building into the regular school day, and into the many other
  ways that young people spend their time, is an effective way to practice building healthy
  self-reg habits ... assets that can then be called at any time, even when life offers a selfreg challenge.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>4</sup> Siegel, Daniel J. (2012). *The developing mind.* New York: The Guilford Press.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>5</sup> Thanks to Linda Lantieri for her helpful list of stress signals.

# **Self-Reg ABC'S: Action + Traction**

Take 5! is an integrative approach to self-reg. And there's lots of evidence that our efforts are most effective & sustainable when we strengthen self-reg assets<sup>6</sup> in people + organizations + communities.

An integrative approach to self-reg pays attention to how we interact with the world, and how the world interacts with us. That means that, while it's important to pay attention to each individual person, it's equally important to address the ways in which we're all in this together. This means paying attention to the collective factors that influence self-regulation: the systems and structures in which we work and learn, for example, and the culture of our organizations and communities.

Let's start with systems and structures. Many schools are exploring ways that classroom design can enhance self-regulation. And there's a growing awareness that self-regulation gets a real boost when the whole school is involved, and not just a 'problem' kid or classroom. Similarly, self-regulation capacities are strengthened when the family is on board, when kids experience consistent expectations and support at home and at school. And, as the self-regulation movement grows, we see how policies and programs in other sectors can foster self-regulation capacities in kids and adults: early childhood education, health prevention & promotion, recreation, child and youth care, suicide prevention programs, mental health services ... even municipal planning. Each sector can make an important contribution to promoting self-regulation, especially when there are opportunities for collaboration.

Culture is equally important. This dimension of self-regulation is harder to pin down and measure; nonetheless, it exerts significant influence on our approach to self-regulation. This dimension is the gathering place for our shared attitudes, values and beliefs, our assumptions, our taken-for-granted's. When we pay attention to the cultural factors that influence self-regulation ... that make it easier to talk about mental health challenges, for example, and to ask for help ... we create new norms, and new possibilities. And we can agree to a shared purpose: building a culture of self-regulation in our school, our organization, our community. We'll know we've had a significant cultural impact when we can say "Self-reg? It's just the way we do things around here."

**Integration is key** to creating the conditions in which self-regulation becomes the norm ... in individuals, in families, in schools, in communities.



<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>6</sup> Assets include the kinds of relationships, social experiences and patterns of interactions known to promote health and over which a community has considerable control. Richard M Lerner in *Developmental assets and asset-building communities: Implications for research and practice.* 

Tam Lundy, PhD Take 5! Institute www.take5selfreg.com

# Integration in Action: Four Asset-Building Zones

# Psychological and Spiritual Assets

Healthy mind, Healthy spirit

# Physical and Behavioral Assets

Healthy body, Healthy actions

#### **Cultural Assets**

Healthy cultural values, beliefs, attitudes, assumptions; social capital; political will

# Social and Ecological Assets

Healthy environment, economy, social systems, institutions, policies, services

#### Four Asset-Building Zones

## Self-Reg: Creating the Conditions for Success<sup>7</sup>

- 1. **Time**. Is there dedicated time to explore self-reg topics at staff meetings and in other individual and team capacity-building settings?
- 2. **People**. Are we aware of the self-reg capacity that currently exists in the school? Who are the in-house leaders? Who can play a coordinating role? Is there a commitment to enhance self-reg capacity throughout the school teachers, EA's, other support staff, parents, volunteers, etc.?
- 3. **Budget.** Are dedicated resources available to support self-reg learning and practice?<sup>8</sup>
- 4. **Learning.** Do staff have opportunities for ongoing professional development growth?
- **5. Culture.** Is there a shared vision and sense of purpose that drives action and accountability? Do we share stories of asset-building successes and challenges? Can we say that "self-reg is just the way we do things around here"?

Tam Lundy, PhD Take 5! Institute www.take5selfreg.com

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>7</sup> Thanks to Search Institute for their decades of research and evidence-gathering – we continually learn from their experience.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>8</sup> Research shows that students who participated in evidence based social emotional learning programs showed an 11% gain in academic achievement compared to students who did not. And, among six evidence based social emotional learning (SEL) interventions studied, it was determined that, on average, for every \$1 invested in SEL programming, there is a return of \$11. CASEL: Collaborative for Academic, Social and Emotional Learning.

#### Appendix I

# **TAKE 5! IN A NUTSHELL**

#### 5 Self-Reg Asset Basics

BE HERE Mindful Awareness Assets

BE WITH Interpersonal Effectiveness Assets

BE CALM Emotion Regulation Assets
BE STRONG Resilience & Thriving Assets

BE CHANGE Connectedness & Contribution Assets

#### Self-Reg Assets: Everyone Needs a Handful

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## **Self-Reg ABC'S: Action + Traction**

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#### Appendix II

# **TAKE 5! Self-Reg Assets for Kids**

#### **5 Self-Reg Asset Basics**

BE HERE Mindful Awareness Assets

BE WITH Interpersonal Effectiveness Assets

BE CALM Emotion Regulation Assets
BE STRONG Resilience & Thriving Assets

BE CHANGE Connectedness & Contribution Assets

## **Self-Reg Skills that Strengthen Each Asset**

#### BE HERE Skills: Mindful Awareness

- **Self-Awareness:** I'm aware of my thoughts, feelings, body, actions.
- **Mindfulness:** Being here *with* myself, *for* myself.
- Felt-sensing: Mindful focusing; tapping inner wisdom.
- **In-Sight:** Making 'me maps'; seeing perspectives, assumptions, taken-for-granted's, judgments.
- **Being Myself:** Tuning in to the present moment & accepting it; validating my experience.

#### **BE WITH Skills:**

#### **Interpersonal Effectiveness**

- Other-Awareness: Being present in 'we space'.
- **Perspective-Taking:** There's always more than one perspective.
- **Mindsight:** 'Me maps' and 'you maps'; integrating insight & empathy.
- **Boundary Awareness**: Me and you, separate and together; respecting my own body, thoughts, feelings & perspectives, and also valuing yours.
- **Mindful Togetherness:** Being here *with* others, and *for* others.



#### **BE CALM Skills:**

#### **Emotion Regulation**

- **Sensing:** What's happening in my body? How is that connected to my thoughts, my emotions and my actions?
- Conscious Breathing: What shifts when I pay attention to my breath?
- **Standing on the Moon:** What shifts again when I stand back a little, when I practice 'witness awareness?'
- **Being the Boss:** What shifts again when I bring awareness to my actions? When 'I'm the boss of me?'
- Building Mastery: Practice, practice, practice ...

#### **BE STRONG Skills:**

#### **Resilience & Thriving**

- **Distress Tolerance:** Finding, accepting meaning in, & tolerating distress.
- Truth Testing: Is there more than one truth in this situation?
- Making Sense of the Problem: A 'sense of coherence' generates health & well-being.
- Wise Mind: Integrating rational mind & emotional mind.
- **Rocking Resilience:** Resisting urges; working with dynamic tension; bouncing back from adversity.

#### **BE CHANGE Skills:**

- Flex/Flow Thinking: Change is constant; everything has its opposite; yes/and thinking; finding hidden potential in the problem.
- Imagine a Preferred Future: A chosen future, not just an inherited future.
- Stepping Up: "What if I ...?" "What if we ...?"
- Playing It Forward: How will this action affect my future, our future, the planet's future?
- **Busting my Immunity to Change:** How do competing commitments undermine my very best intentions?



# Take 5! for Everyone

# Take 5! Self-Reg Assets for Younger Kids

BE HERE	BE WITH	BE CALM	BE STRONG	BE CHANGE
Mindful Awareness: Being Present in ME Space 1. Awareness – Me:	Interpersonal Effectiveness: Being Together in WE Space  1. Awareness – We:	Emotion Regulation Senses in Sync  1.Sensing: What's happening in my	Resilience & Thriving Even When Life Gets Tough  1. Distress Tolerance:	Connectedness & Contribution Making Change that Makes a Difference  1.Being Connected:
I'm aware of my thoughts, feelings, body, actions  2. Mindfulness: Being here with	Being present in 'we space'  2. Flexible Thinking  Others might see things differently.	body? How is that connected to my thoughts, my emotions and my actions? 2. Conscious	I can soothe myself when I'm feeling triggered. I can notice my impulse, then do	I feel connected to people & nature. What I do affects others; what others do affects me. 2. Being a Change
myself, for myself  3. Felt-sensing: Getting information from my mind & body; trusting my gut sense.	3. Mindsight: 'Me maps' and 'you maps; insight & empathy 4. Boundary	Breathing: What shifts when I pay attention to my breath?  3. Standing on the Moon	the opposite.  2. Reality Check: I can't always change the situation but I can change the way I respond.	Wizard: Life is always changing. I can be a force for positive change; I can make a difference in my world.
4. In-Sight: Making 'me maps'; seeing my thoughts & feelings; seeing my triggers & reactions.	Awareness:  Me and you, separate and together; respecting my own body, thoughts.	Does the problem look different if I'm seeing from a distance e.g. 'standing on the moon?' 4. Being the Boss:	3. Lemonade Thinking: Seeing the opportunity within	3. Stepping Up: "What if I?" "What if we?" 4. Playing it Forward: In my mind, I wonder: How will this action affect
5. Being Myself: Seeing my uniqueness; valuing my strengths & challenges; trusting my senses & my	feelings & perspectives, and also valuing yours.  5. Mindful Togetherness:	I can be the boss of my senses and my responses. I have emotions my emotions don't have me.	the problem.  4. Wise Mind: Using my thinking mind and my feeling mind.  5. Rocking	me, my friends, my family, my community?  5. Seeing My Resistance to Change:
experiences in life.	I think about you, and I think about me. We validate each others' experiences & perspectives.	5. Building Mastery: I practice my calming skills every day.	Resilience: I can resist urges, rebalance my thoughts & emotions, bounce	How do I sometimes get stuck in old habits, even when I know a change is needed?

Lundy, 2016



# Take 5! Self-Reg Assets for Youth

BE HERE	BE WITH	BE CALM	BE STRONG	BE CHANGE
Mindful Awareness: Being Present in ME Space	Interpersonal Effectiveness: Being Together in WE Space  1. Awareness – We:	Emotion Regulation Senses in Sync 1. Sensing – What's	Resilience & Thriving Even When Life Gets Tough  1. Distress	Connectedness & Contribution Making Change that Makes a Difference 1.Flex/Flow Thinking:
1. Awareness – Me:     Thoughts, feelings,     body, actions 2. Mindfulness:     Being here with     myself, for myself 3. Felt-sensing:     Mindful focusing;     tapping inner wisdom 4. In-Sight:     Making 'me maps';     seeing perspectives,     assumptions, taken-     for-granted's,     judgments 5. Presence in     Every Moment:     Tuning in to the     present moment &     accepting it;     validating my     experience	Being present in we space'  2. Perspective-taking: There's always more than one perspective  3. Mindsight: Integrating insight & empathy  4. Boundary Awareness: Me and you, separate and together  5. Mindful Togetherness: Being here with others, and for others.	happening in my body? How is that connected to my thoughts, my emotions & actions?  2. Conscious Breathing: What shifts when I pay attention to my breath?  3. Standing on the Moon What shifts again when I stand back a little, when I practice "witness awareness?"  4. Living my Power: What shifts again when I bring awareness to my actions? When "I'm the boss of me?"  5. Building Mastery: Practice, practice, practice, practice	Tolerance: Accepting, finding meaning in, & tolerating distress  2. Truth Testing: Is there more than one truth in this situation?  3. Making Sense of the Problem: A 'sense of coherence' generates health & well-being  4. Wise Mind: Integrating rational mind & emotional mind  5. Rocking Resilience: Resisting urges; Working with dynamic tension; bouncing back from adversity	Change is constant; everything has its opposite; yes/and thinking; finding hidden potential in the problem  I Imagine a Preferred Future: A chosen future, not just an inherited future  Stepping Up: "What if I?" "What if we?"  Playing it Forward: How will this action affect my future, our future, the planet's future?  Busting My Immunity to Change: How do competing commitments undermine my very best intentions?

Tam Lundy, 2016



# Self-Reg Assets for Personal & Professional Development

BE HERE	BE WITH	BE CALM	BE STRONG	BE CHANGE
Mindful Awareness: Being Present in ME Space  1. Awareness – Me: Thoughts, feelings, body, actions 2. Mindfulness: Being here with myself, for myself 3. Felt-sensing: Mindful focusing; tapping inner wisdom 4. In-Sight: Making 'me maps'; seeing perspectives, assumptions, taken- for-granted's, judgments 5. Presence in	Interpersonal Effectiveness: Being Together in WE Space  1. Awareness – We: Being present in 'we space' 2. Perspective- taking: There's always more than one perspective 3. Mindsight: Integrating insight & empathy 4. Boundary Awareness: Me and you, separate and together 5. Mindful Togetherness: Being here with others.	Emotion Regulation Senses in Sync  1. Sensing: What's happening in my body? How is that connected to my thoughts, my emotions & actions?  2. Conscious Breathing: What shifts when I pay attention to my breath?  3. Becoming the Witness What shifts again when I stand back a little, when I practice 'witness awareness?"	Resilience & Thriving Even When Life Gets Tough  1. Distress Tolerance: Accepting, finding meaning in, & tolerating distress 2. Truth Testing: Is there more than one truth in this situation?  3. Making Sense of the Problem: A 'sense of coherence' generates health & well-being  4. Wise Mind: Integrating rational	BE CHANGE  Connectedness & Contribution Making Change that Makes a Difference  1.Flex/Flow Thinking: Change is constant; everything has its opposite; yes/and thinking; finding hidden potential in the problem 2. Imagine a Preferred Future: A chosen future, not just an inherited future 3. Stepping Up: "What if \cdots?" "What if we \cdots?"  4. Playing it Forward: How will this action affect my future, our future, the planet's
Every Moment: Tuning in to the present moment & accepting it; validating my experience	and for others	4. Living my Power: What shifts again when I bring awareness to my actions? When 'I'm the boss of me?'  5. Building Mastery: Practice, practice, practice	mind & emotional mind  5. Rocking Resilience: Resisting urges; working with dynamic tension; bouncing back from	future?  5. Busting My Immunity to Change: How do competing commitments undermine my very best intentions?

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