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itsjustyou *NEW* sletter

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--- My book chapters this morning were so good. All about "awareness" being the key to healing, not time. NOT TIME. I feel like this has been the ah-ha in my life since journaling. Uncomfortable ah-has, like painful as fuck and then you take a deep breath, write, and release with a big exhale saying "ah-ha..." It's like, I've realized some massive things about painful areas in my life over the last several years because of the ability to write with the intent of figuring out what the painful thing was happening for? What did I need to shift? Why is this happening? What in God's name is the lesson here so that thing could never have to happen again. My head keeps flipping to the story of "my trauma isn't as bad as "their" trauma so I have it good - who am I to complain when there are people out there with serious issues?!" I think so many people are stuck there. I'm over that phrase & story in my head - over it. Trauma is an experience that leaves you with an incredibly warped, twisted, negative, take my breath away, clench my jaw, sweat in places that annoy you - feeling in your gut. The feelings that cause incredibly annoying and sometimes painful thoughts that are on a continuous spin cycle in our heads. But also the good things - ha! Writing and diving into these pages has allowed me to slow down and identify the areas that I'm no longer willing to miss out on because I'm too distracted with my thoughts - that actually makes me tear up.

The puppy noses, the smells, have you ever smelled a puppy foot on a puppy who was born with three bad legs - they're extra sweet.

Have you ever sat at a dining room table with two teenagers who resemble you but also unfortunately

I SAVED ME.

hold parts of their dad too? You watch their facial expressions like a hawk to memorize each curve to help you cope with the fact that these moments are going to get fewer and farther between. Fuck, those moments have been super sweet. I've held hands a bit longer lately and taken the mental pictures instead of digital ones so I wouldn't be distracted with my phone in my hand. I guess you could say I take a bit more time to pay attention & grow that awareness. Inhale. That felt good. Exhale.

--- July 2, 2022

I wrote that in my journal this month and afterwards, it was like I lifted my head and came up for breath from another world. Have you experienced that yet? The rush of being out of your body letting your hand take over as *the voice* just writes.

It's happened to me a lot lately. Each time it happens, I hear the voice repeat: *this is how journaling and routine have saved you* - This. It's not about the habits or the actions. It's about having the ability to listen to my inner voice, to slow down and really listen to what she wants, needs, likes, loves, and craves. So many people don't allow themselves to get to that space, do they?

I guess it's not routine that saved me. It's not the simple act of journaling that saved me. It was allowing myself to slow down and listen, that saved me. Even when life was noisy - even before I started journaling and allowing the voice to come out, she was always inside, directing me like I was a puppet on strings.

Life has shifted a lot for me in the last couple of months. So much that my routine has shifted, habits have shifted, vision has shifted, actions, thoughts, all of it. I've had to pause - rethink, reorganize, rewire, and redo - more

times than I'd like to admit. Tis' life I suppose. I was just reminded of my tattoo: *I'm the hero of this story. I don't need to be saved.*

I've realized now more than ever before that I do truly have everything I need *inside* myself. We are often on the hunt for external validation or direction on where we're taking our life like someone else has the outline and story already written. No one has it. No one is coming to save you. Right?

The key is to slowing down enough - releasing the hustle, the need to be busy, constantly distracted and occupied - to be able to see and hear where you need to go. We're clouded with chaos. We're distracted with social media and the comparison. I was listening to a podcast and she talked about all of the influencers that she follows. < AUTOCORRECT tried to tell me that "influencer" isn't a real word - that says all we need to hear, no? Anyways - the woman on the podcast spoke of the mom she followed that was into making her own baby food, the entrepreneur she followed that was growing her business, the podcast host who's hit millions of streams, the woman who's obsessed with re-doing furniture and flipping houses, this & that - right? We all have the long list of people we follow who are inspiring us in all kinds of different areas of life.

The problem is that we turn off that phone, close out of Instagram, and see what's in front of us as flawed. We then try to make the baby food, grow the business, record the podcast, redo that coffee table that we've had for years, add wallpaper to our home office - all while completely stressing ourselves the fuck out. It's because we think we have to do it all in order to feel valued and accomplished.

On repeat in my head is the phrase:

You can do anything - but not everything.

I don't know how "open" to be at this moment in my life but I'm going to share what feels good. I feel like during every life pivot we're given two options: grow or *stay stuck*. I refuse to *stay stuck*. People think growth is uncomfortable - I believe paralysis is a living hell. Imagine, being stuck in the exact same miserable and uncomfortable place in your life, seeing no end in sight. That to me is more painful than anything else and because of that, shifting into growth is *easy* for me.

Towards the end of May, things in my home shifted. I don't feel comfortable going into details yet because they truly are between me and my family, but my boyfriend of 3.5 years decided to move out. Space and time are sometimes needed for healing, as painful as it can be to accept. With this shift, I went from having my entire day structured around another human to living solo again, raising my two daughters and two puppies.

I think back to when I was single after my divorce, my kids were so much younger and needed so much more from me than they seem to crave right now. They were 8 & 10 years old when I filed for divorce and simultaneously, I went through some major health issues and surgeries leading to my permanent ileostomy. Things felt like they kind of exploded all at once and my girls & I had to shift and grow in a lot of different ways, together.

I now see this recent shift as another opportunity to do so. At 16 & 14 years old, my girls need something entirely different from

me and I had to get curious on what that needed to look like. In addition, from experience, I know how important it is that I remain focused on myself and my personal goals & self-care. I will never be able to show up as the mom and entrepreneur I want to be if I'm living out of desperation & fear of the unknown. I want to lead by example for them - what to do, what not to do. I want them to grow up knowing that it's not selfish to take care of yourself, it's required. That's easier said than done isn't it?

We wake up with a list of 100 things to focus on that don't include *us* and we dive into the day. Our self care is on the list but somehow, day after day, it's pushed to the bottom of the list until we reach the end of the evening and have enough energy to maybe scroll Instagram, munch on our favorite binge-worthy food, then crash into bed. It's a cycle of "*stuck*" that I am choosing to no longer allow.

Let me first change the images of "self care" that you may have floating around in your head as you read this.

I'm not talking face masks or bubble baths, while those things are nice, I feel like it's so much deeper than that. To me, self care is a constant state of realignment. Self-care may change daily as you start your journey and figure out what lights you up, fuels your fire, slows you down, allows you to disconnect, and helps you feel a little more like *you*. Self-care is refocusing. It's a series of daily decisions that each one of us gets to make regardless of income, social status, health, family situations, number of Instagram followers, etc. My self-care habits & routine are splattered all over my IG stories every day it feels like but I'd like the opportunity to dive a little



deeper into the things I've focused on to realign during life shifts and pivots that are a guarantee. < Hear that. Life is never going to stay the same, it's always in motion, always pivoting and shifting. How will you move with it?

I'm going to begin with the disclaimer that I'm not a certified Nutritionist, I'm only an expert in my experiences and my body, as I've shared before. Please be your own advocate and do what you know works best for you and your body. If you have no idea what that looks like or where to start, I hope that in me sharing my experiences, you find some

guidance. I do not believe that nutrition, fitness, or wellness in general is a one-size-fits-all thing. I believe that every *body* and the way how it responds to food, workouts, and other tools I'm going to share are dependent on stress, environment, hormones, etc.

The most impactful thing I ever did for my own health journey was to stop watching everyone else. I guess this goes back to Instagram and the comparison game we all play. We see the pictures of the perfectly colorful plates and the 6-pack abs next to them and we immediately think: *that's what I should be eating to look even close to that*. We follow influencers who seem to have their life together and compare it to ours that, that we think is unique, filled with a variety of different stressors and environmental factors that affect how we show up.

Sometimes we have to stop *shoulding* all over ourselves and start listening to our bodies. About a year ago, I created a 3-Day Intentional Eating Journal to help people gain more clarity and awareness around what they eat. If you



haven't tried it, it's definitely worth checking out. This process is one of the things I bring back and channel when I'm going through a life pivot. I mean, I could lie to you and tell you that I'm superhuman and never feel like sitting on my couch crying with a bag of chips and chewy chocolate chip cookies next to me but I too, have to fight the urge. I have to be aware of how my emotions, thoughts, feelings, and even boredom play a role in my eating habits and movement.

Truth is, I know how good it feels to feel good. I went on a work trip mid-July and after 4 days of eating and drinking - quite literally - anything I wanted, I felt like shit. Heavy, tired, lethargic, I felt gross. I sat there next to Ali & said: *People literally walk around feeling like this every day - isn't that insane?!* I know how good I feel on a daily basis when I fuel my body with foods that energize me and help me function at my best. I know how good it feels to bring intention to my daily workouts, moving my body and being consistent in that. Why would I intentionally choose live any other way?

When my life is up in the air or emotional are high, I have full control of the energy I carry and create by what I put in my body.

So for me, it starts with my morning matcha followed by my plant-based preworkout. I prioritize my superfood shake with a turmeric latte mix added in post-workout. Lunch is always the same thing: avocado toast. I use 3 eggs, two slices of local sourdough, 1 organic avocado, sprinkle some Tajin and green Cholula - *bam*. It's like a flavor explosion. I rarely snack in the afternoon because I'm full from lunch but if I do it's some pistachios and/or plantain chips with guac. Dinner is always random but always aligned with what my body wants: I'm a big fan

of bowls: grilled chicken, roasted sweet potato, throw in some red lentil pasta, hummus, olives - whatever I want! Desert (because I always seem to want something sweet) is a bowl of fruit/berries with pine nuts and pistachios on top. Sometimes I add honey or sprinkle Tajin on top. Take some time to slow down and listen to what your body is craving during these high stress times. Fuel it, move it, and *slow down* to listen with intention to pay attention.

When is the last time you did something simply for the joy of doing it?

Do you remember the last time you felt totally disconnected & in the moment?

Hustle culture has made those times few & far between. The constant rush keeps our minds & bodies consistently moving and we almost feel *off* if we're not in motion? Does that hit home? Several months ago I started to ask myself those two questions above and the answers were: a really long fucking time ago and no, I don't remember the last time that happened.

I started to think back, like way back, as far as I could remember. I pictured *little Raina* with a giant smile on her face and all the core memories she holds on to. Outdoors, digging potatoes in my aunts garden on her big farm. I still remember being on my hands & knees, covered in dirt and the feeling of the sun hitting my back. It smelled like cows. She had horses and I'd ride often, following my uncle through the woods staring at the butt of the horse in front of me, where there were no paths, just holding on and enjoying the ride.

Noted - Outdoors. Sunshine. Garden. Farm smells. Dirt. Horses. I needed to find that. Buying a small ranch in Colorado is now on my

dream-board but I knew I had to start small. Mini breaks outside are now a serious priority to me. I leave my phone in the house most of the time, let the dogs out with me, and I just lay with my eyes closed on our back patio and listen to the noises. I let the sunshine hit my face and pay attention to the warmth as it hits every spot. I bought 2x4 raised garden beds and while most of it has died, I've found pleasure in replanting, watering, digging, and watching as my two tomato plants decide to pop out little green tomatoes. I'm still working on my gardening skills but would like to think I've mastered the indoor plant game which has brought me an

equal, if not more, amount of joy. I found a ranch and yes, there are probably some near you, you'll just have to google. The ranch I found offered boarding, lessons, all kinds of stuff so I sent one email inquiring and the \$60/lesson price tag sent chills of YES up and down my spine. I just had to decide.

This joy and disconnect takes an hour of my day and allows me to be completely present and in the moment, the now. There are

no wandering thoughts when you've got a massive beast between your legs. HAHA - okay, could have worded that differently. Same with the garden, the dogs, the sun. Create the space for yourself to completely check out at times during the week, and in turn, create the energy you need to show up a little differently as a mom, a wife, an entrepreneur, a friend.

I used to kind of roll my eyes and *pffff* under my breath a couple of years ago when people told me to slow down and prioritize the disconnect. *It'll help you show up better, it'll allow you to refocus, it'll realign you* - they said. All I could think about was how I didn't have the time to



slow down. If I didn't do all the things, who in the hell was going to do them?

It took a phone call and a little reorganizing of my calendar to make the shift in my week that allowed me to prioritize these big deep breaths and moments of recharge. Make a list today - put yourself back in child-you's head and remember what it was like to not have your phone and be fully present in the moment. Your laughter, your joy, your *ahhhhhh* breaths. What could you include in your day to bring that in?

Before prioritizing joy and disconnect, I was in burnout mode from being *on* all the time. My 9-5 job was replaced with social media 9+ years ago and it took me about 9 years to set up solid boundaries around what my use/time commitments needed to be. I got curious on my burnout realizing that I was tired of being plugged in and not completely present with my family, community, and self.

I talk to one on one clients weekly who feel this *pull* to their phones and don't even use it as a way to work their business - it's *that* addictive. Gut check: is social media affecting the way you show up for your family, yourself, or your community. If it is, what needs to shift? I decided to place hard rules for myself and that looked like plugging my phone in while I made dinner and instead listened to music and talked with the kids. It meant plugging my phone in at night and reading a book instead of scrolling. Ali got me hooked on these romance novels and holy - I don't know if I can say it's any easier to put down. I also decided to go completely dark/silent on Sundays. It's the one day of the week where I totally unplug



and leave the app alone. It took me several weeks to stop mindlessly going to the app and savagely closing it out like I was doing something naughty. It's a lot easier now to wake up on Sundays and be in the moment, I actually look forward to it now. What boundaries can you put in place starting today?

Since May, I also decided to recommit to my community. Shit, I had missed my friends! I missed trips with them, late nights, laughter, tears, real talk... all the things you do when you're surrounded by the people that fill your cup. I took a trip to Palm Springs with 10 of my teammates and had *the* best time. I got to bring

my two daughters along for the trip and that made it even sweeter. They may disagree as they were mostly surrounded by a bunch of 30-year old moms who escaped from their children, love working out, and sipped tequila like it was OJ.

The next month, I was in St. Louis with 50 of those men & women getting my cup filled - yet again. We drank, ate, roamed, learned, celebrated, cried, and had conversations till we couldn't keep our eyes open. I

left that trip with a little more pep in my step and an excitement to get back home to my babies. I got home, slept for what felt like a couple days, cuddled puppies and had laughs with my teens and was reminded of how lucky I am.

Since then, the girls and I have prioritized our dinner time and adventure Saturdays. Mckenzie reminded me the other day that I only have a couple years left of this and while it was like a shot to the gut that she giggled about, I heard her. I will be there for the dinners, the dances, the shopping trips, the car rides, and I'll stare, unapologetic, at both of their faces, holding on hard to every curve in complete presence.

If I haven't yet convinced you to start journaling, maybe this section will do it. The last piece I want to share with you is getting clarity around what you want and casting a vision for the life you're building. Life will pivot. Sometimes the vision we had last year must change, it must be rearranged and reframed. As our life changes, we change. With that, what we want for our future must be realigned.

After listening to a podcast sharing a morning Visualization Medication, I grabbed my journal and started to write. I definitely recommend you take a listen to see what pops up for you. It was all about your highest-self, visualizing her, what she does, how she looks, carries herself, the energy she holds, her morning routine, evening routine, what her free time looks like, how she grocery shops, and more. I took the time to really put myself in this space 5 years from now. What would my job look like? Relationships? Family and Travel? In my last newsletter I shared a bit about my big picture vision and what I'm working toward but this highest-self visualization really shifted things for me. We can cast these visions and hold them so close in a space within us where we are reminded of what we're working towards on a daily basis. When you close your eyes and see the best-you with a smile on her face, money in her bank account, a job that she's in

love with, a relationship that fills her cup, etc., you can then start to realign what today looks like. You get to see what you're working towards even if it's not the reality you get to wake up to right now. Take that big picture and hold it in your mind. Feel her, see her, let it take over. Now, reflect.

What is something you can do today, this week, this month, that will inch you closer towards transitioning into that highest version of yourself? Maybe you get up and workout for 10 minutes or cook at home tonight? Maybe you sit down to create a budget or brain dump that business you've been wanting to start? Maybe you say no. You rest. You put up boundaries. What can you do to just move the needle.

I've shared that in 2020 I created a 2-3 year vision of what I wanted my day to look like, morning routine, energy, home, all of it. Just two years later I can read that journal entry and see how real that vision became because I did exactly what I shared above. Created the vision and got crystal clear on what actions would help me move closer to making that a reality. While it's not perfect or exact and some pieces feel like they've gone backwards, I can see how close I've gotten and I have a - to my core gut feeling - that things are going to work out. I couldn't say that a couple of years ago, hell I could barely create the vision - I just had to focus on showing up.

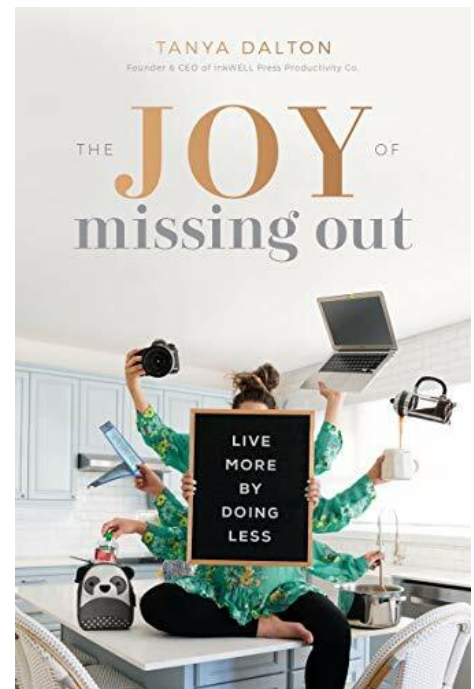
CLARITY & VISION

MUST READ.

As I started to read this book, I kept humming the words: *fuck, she literally wrote a book that I could have written*. Page after page, chapter after chapter, I captured nuggets that for me, really helped justify my actions and move my own needle a bit. The number one topic my clients need help with is time - where it goes, how it's spent, the carelessness with it. We let kids, work, spouses, friends, and things we couldn't say no to take over and then complain that we don't have the time we need for what feels good to us.

"When we have clear boundaries in place, we are able to focus our time and our energy so we can be more present for our priorities. Stop spinning & start living."

I have said: The reason you're inconsistent is because you don't set boundaries. 10/10 recommend if this hit home.



WORK WITH ME.

Inhale. Exhale. What went through your head as you read my newsletter today? I know there were some pieces that you found helpful, some that you probably already knew about or implemented, and some that made you think: *that's nice Raina, but your life is different than mine and it's just not as easy for me*. That one is my favorite.

Your routine doesn't have to look like mine, your priorities will be different. Your joy list will possibly be full of things that aren't on my list and the amount of time you have to dedicate to them may be different. You'll probably wake up earlier or later than I do and you may be in bed at a different time than I am but the truth is, we all have the same 168 hours in a week and we get to decide how we spend them regardless of what that looks like now.

My challenge to you is to cast your vision on what that day as your higher self looks like.

How do you want your week to feel?

In that vision, what is your highest self, eating and drinking on a daily basis?

What does she do for fun? How does she spend her evenings and weekends?

Who does she recharge with, community, family, or friends?

What does her support system look like?

What boundaries does she unapologetically have in place?

How does she disconnect?

Once you've got it, what's the first step to creating that reality?

I know, you feel overwhelmed, not because there's too much but because you don't know where to start. And that's what I'd love to help you work on: *where to start and how to maintain the shift*.

ONE ON ONE COACHING OPTIONS