

FROM SURVIVING TO THRIVING

— WORKBOOK —

CREATING A THRIVING MAMA MODE
WITH JOY, CALM, AND HAPPINESS



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A Message From Dr. Claire



Welcome and congratulations on making the first step to create **Thriving Mama Mode** in motherhood! I am so glad you are here! By signing up and taking *From Surviving to Thriving: Creating a Thriving Mama Mode with More Joy, Calm and Happiness in Motherhood*, you are on your way to moving from surviving mode to **Thriving Mama Mode!**

In this course, you will be supported, guided and encouraged to learn more about yourself and what you need to do to create and maintain a **Thriving Mama Mode**.

There is a beautiful saying, *that when a child is born, so too is a mother*. As a mama of four daughters, I couldn't agree more! One of the most life-changing roles a woman can experience is becoming a mother. And while there are hundreds of books on how to care for a child, less common are books or guides for mothers on how to care for herself in the role of spanning a lifetime.

Mothers are the foundation of the home, nurturing, caring, guiding and loving children and family. The modern mama has so many demands on her, not only does she care for her family, she also works to provide at home, in her career, volunteering in her community, and behind the scenes giving her family what they need to *thrive*.

A mother's intention is almost always to do her best with the energy and resources she has available. She will instinctively put her family's needs first as her heart and mind are in service to her family and others, often putting herself last, with little energy or time left for self-care.

When a mother doesn't prioritize her health and well-being through self-care, she can become run down, overwhelmed, stressed, feeling depleted and isolated. Sometimes her family sees it, and other times she hides it well; friends and family often unaware of her struggles and suffering.

In my work with thousands of mothers over twenty years of counseling, here is what I know: when a mother is supported and encouraged to identify what she needs to feel healthy and happy and given the skills to care for herself, she **THRIVES!**

My intention with this course is to inspire, educate and help you transform living in survival mode to moving into a thriving mama mode. How we care for ourselves is a powerful lesson we pass on to our children. And when we care for ourselves, we give not only a gift of health and well-being to us, we also provide our families with an enormous gift! We don't have to choose between self-care and caring for our children and families, we can do both, acknowledging the importance of ourselves and those we care for.



I designed the *From Surviving to Thriving: Creating A Thriving Mama Mode With Joy, Calm and Happiness* with a great deal of intention, care, and expertise. Each topic is designed to be completed in sequence, as each topic builds upon the next. Please complete the videos and exercises in order and do not skip around. Each topic has personal growth exercises specifically created to compliment the video lesson. And each section of the personal growth exercises is meant to be completed after watching the videos.

First things first, if you haven't already, print out the *Thriving Mama Mode Workbook*, which you are reading. You will need this workbook to complete the exercises at the end of each module.

Next, begin moving through each topic by watching the video followed by completing the exercise for the video topic you completed. As you will see, this course is self-paced. I would suggest completing one topic a day and up to two or more topics in a day if you have longer chunks of time to watch the videos and reflect thoughtfully with the exercises in the workbook. Do give each topic devoted time, energy and thoughtfulness to receive the most benefit from the course.

Each video ranges in time, on average up to 15 minutes, some a little more, some a little less. The personal exercises for each topic vary in time, take your time, be sure to answer each exercise, as the questions build upon one another and help you to create a plan to thrive!

This is a process, a journey and there is no right or wrong, instead, what works best for you!

The exercises and questions in the workbook are designed to create awareness and help you identify areas within motherhood to strengthen and create a *Thriving Mama Mode* in your life! Be as specific and honest as you can when answering the questions in all of the modules. There is no right or wrong answers. Instead, I encourage you to see these exercises as a process, a journey of discovering and reconnecting with yourself. As you watch the videos and complete the workbook exercises, you are moving into a deeper awareness and understanding of yourself and what is needed to create thriving in motherhood, experiencing more joy, calm, happiness and well-being.

In each topic area, there are questions towards the end of the section highlighted in blue, if you printed the workbook in color, and if you printed in black and white, you will see a lotus next to these questions. Be sure to answer all these questions because these answers will be used later on in the course to help you create YOUR plan to THRIVE!



Before you begin this course, please read the ***Thriving Mama Mode Manifesto*** on the following page. I wrote this one night when my children and husband were asleep, and I was thinking about the moms who would be taking this course. I was imagining, what I would say to a mom who took this course. If we could sit face to face and talk about motherhood, what would I say to her. And the words in the Thriving Mama Manifesto came to my heart and mind and I want to share it with you!

Our intention is energy, and we can feel that in our heart, mind, and body. Reading and signing your name takes the intention within you and sends it out to the world, a concrete step towards thriving in motherhood. Keep in mind creating thriving mama mode in your life is a journey, not a destination. This is a process of self-discovery where you are learning what's working well and the places that need attention, love, and nurturance, so you can THRIVE!

With all my heart, I am so glad you are here!

If you have any questions, comments, or feedback please reach out and share at:
DrClaire@MomsWellBeing.com.

I really look forward to hearing from you and how you're creating a Thriving Mama Mode!

Dr. Claire



Thriving Mama Mode Manifesto



I am enough.
I am more than enough.
I am more than my behaviors, choices, circumstances and personal history.
I have gifts and abilities unique to me to share with my family and the world.
I am committed to taking care of my physical, emotional, mental, social and spiritual well-being.
Taking care of myself is not selfish or wrong, nor does it take away from my family.
When I take care of myself, doing what is needed to be healthy, restored and happy;
I am able to care for my family with intention and meaning.
When I respond to myself and others from a place of thriving rather than surviving,
I am giving myself and my family an enormous gift.
Taking care of myself is a practice, a belief, and acknowledgment that,
I matter.
My needs matter.
My well-being matters.
Sacrificing self-care disrupts my well-being and creates an unhealthy cycle in my life of depletion,
creating an environment of surviving instead of thriving.
Even when I am defined by my roles and responsibilities,
I acknowledge it is essential it is to care for myself.
When I take care of myself, I am teaching my family a valuable lesson;
we are responsible for knowing and learning how to take care of ourselves.
My example to care for myself is a powerful lesson I pass on to my family.
When I take care of myself, with intention, I create a loving space where I can THRIVE.
Learning to thrive in motherhood is not about perfection or the absence of mistakes, obstacles or setbacks.
Instead, when these things happen, I will respond to the situation with compassion and curiosity to learn and re-adjust my plan to thrive as needed.
Thriving in motherhood is about intention.
Thriving in motherhood is knowing myself and putting into action what I need to feel joyful, calm and happy in motherhood.
Because my health and well-being matter.
And, I matter so very much.

Signature:

Date:



Thriving Mama Mode Beginning Exercises:



Before you dive in and take the course, please take the free quiz, [How is Your Well-Being and Self-Care](https://www.momswellbeing.com/quiz/how-is-your-well-being-and-self-care) at [DrClaireNicogossian.com](https://www.momswellbeing.com). Taking the quiz will give you an overview of what your self-care skills and strategies are right now before you take the course. This is great, because knowing what your baseline well-being and self-care score is BEFORE you take the course will help you in a few ways. First, the quiz will give you an overview of your strengths and areas to improve upon regarding your self-care. Second, you'll receive feedback on how to make changes and improve areas that need your attention. And third, when you complete this course, you can take the quiz again and see how you have self-improved!



My results from the How is Your Well-Being and Self-Care? quiz:

Physical Self-Care: _____ **Social Support:** _____

Mental/Cognitive Self-Care: _____ **Spiritual Self-Care:** _____

What are some reasons why you decided to take this course? For example, I'm in survival mode and need help. I want to learn how to take care of myself, my friend or mom suggested I take the course, etc.

What are some goals for taking this course? What is it you want to learn? For example, I want to learn how to manage being a mom and doing things I enjoy, I need to make more friends and don't know how, I need to take better care of myself.

Becoming a mother has many unexpected moments and experiences! Being a mom is the ultimate learn as you go role with so many responsibilities. Reflecting on motherhood, what have been some of the surprises you have experienced? For example, the amount of time needed to care for a child, there is so much to learn about child development, getting out of the house takes forever, how much I could love my child, etc.



From Surviving to Thriving: What You Need to Know



In motherhood, we've all experienced moments and phases when we are in **Survival Mode**. In survival mode, we're in *Reactivity Mode*. And this is characterized going through your day reacting to the stress, demands, and responsibilities without much of a plan or strategies in place to manage stress. When we are in **Survival Mode**, there is little if any self-care skills happening.

Thriving in motherhood is not the absence of **STRESS**, rather, it's knowing yourself, knowing what you need to feel healthy, happy and purposeful and bringing those behaviors or components into your daily life.

Thriving is being able to respond to the stress in motherhood and life with intention and creating a plan to take care of yourself.



As highlighted in the video, **Survival Mode** can present in many different ways. For example, **Survival Mode** for some moms may be feeling completely overwhelmed, having chronic stress without support or self-care skills to manage stress, or a significant life event, like a new baby, marital strain, job loss, having an illness or losing someone important to you.

What does **Survival Mode** mean to you?

Please list a few times in your life when you were in **Survival Mode**. For example, some moms have shared the following: After the birth of my first child. When I moved to a new city, started over everything, including making new friends. When I went back to work after maternity leave. When my mother was diagnosed with cancer and my grandmother passed away.



From Surviving to Thriving: What You Need to Know



When we're in **Survival Mode**, our body, thoughts and feelings can give us clues or signs we are heading into or already in **Survival Mode**. For example, napping more, eating for comfort, stop exercising, more irritability, isolating yourself, headaches or migraines, avoid interacting with my children and giving them lots of screen time. How do you know when you are in survival mode? What does it look like? Jot down the ways you know you're in **Survival Mode**:

What are the situations or stressors that can propel you into **Survival Mode**? For example, partner/spouse traveling, in-laws visiting, child who is sick, mental health issues, certain times of the year-holidays, summer, etc.

When you hear the word **thriving**, what do you think of? What does thriving mean to you? How would you describe thriving in motherhood?

Think back to a time in your life, perhaps your pre-mom life or another time and ask yourself this: When was the last time I was in **Thriving Mode**?



From Surviving to Thriving: What You Need to Know



How do you know when you are in **Thriving Mode**? What does this look like in your day-to-day life? For example, When I am in **Thriving Mode** I feel calm and rested. I am able to exercise and see friends and go out with my sweetie, OR, I honestly don't know what thriving looks like but I would enjoy being around my kids more.

When you are in **Thriving Mode**, what are the key components to staying in a thriving mode? For example, Getting enough sleep, Exercise, Appointments with my therapist, getting support from my sweetie and not fighting with each other.

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When you are in **Survival Mode**, are you able to identify what you need to do to move from **Survival Mode** to **Thriving Mode**? List what has worked for you: For example, Reduce alcohol use, Go to bed at reasonable time instead of fall asleep on couch, Meal prep for the week and bring my lunch to work, Find time for hobbies and interests I enjoy.

1.

2.

3.

4.

Thriving Mode is all about self-care! In the next video, **Self-Care 101: What You Need to Know**, you'll be learning in depth what self-care is, and what it isn't. You'll also learn how to bring self-care skills and behaviors in your life for a **Thriving Mama Mode**!



Self-Care 101: What You Need to Know



Self-care is a term used to describe behaviors to support your physical, emotional, mental, social, and spiritual parts of yourself. Self-care behaviors and actions help to create, maintain and improve health and well-being.

Self-care is Not:

- Self-Pampering
- Self-Indulgence
- Optional
- Selfish
- A One Time Event

Thriving in motherhood is a commitment to self-care, taking care of yourself in the many dimensions of who you are so that you can experience more joy, calm, and happiness in motherhood.



After watching **Self-Care 101: What You Need to Know**, what was the biggest take away for you understanding self-care:

What are your current self-care behaviors? How do you take care of yourself?

Our family, the home we grew up in, is the first place we learn about the world. Mental health professionals call our childhood family, our family of origin. Think back for a moment to your parents, or step-parents, grandparents or any significant adults in your life who helped raise you. How did the adults in your life take care of themselves? List the significant adults in your life and the self-care activities you observed they engaged in for well-being.



Self-Care 101: What You Need to Know



Sometimes the significant adults in our lives do not take care of themselves. Please share how the adults in your life did not care for themselves or manage stress and what you observed. For example, Using alcohol to escape and cope, excessive shopping or sleeping to avoid stress. Intense fighting and arguing. Working long hours, etc.

How have these observed experiences, including healthy and unhealthy behaviors, impacted and influenced how you take care of yourself?

On a scale from one to ten, one equaling ***no self-care behaviors*** and ten equaling ***a lot of self-care behaviors, where would you number yourself?***

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

On a scale of one to ten, ***one being no stress*** in your life and ***ten being the highest amount of stress*** in your life, please circle the current level of stress in your life:

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10



Self-Care 101: What You Need to Know



Look at your answers from the previous two questions on self-care behaviors and current stress levels. Do you notice a correlation or relationship between your level of stress and your self-care behaviors? If so what is it: For example, no or low self-care and high stress, high self-care and low stress, average self-care and high stress. If you notice you have high stress and low self-care, you'll need to plan to increase self-care behaviors. If you have high self-care and are still experiencing high stress, you may need to add in new self-care behaviors or reach out for support to manage stress.

Who are the people in your life who encourages you to take care of yourself? For example, your sweetie, your mom and aunt, therapist, mother-in-law, friend etc.

What are some of the barriers that get in the way of self-care? For example, lack of time, don't know how, limited support, limited finances, etc.



What are your self-care goals?



Self-Care 101: What You Need to Know



If you feel uncertain where to start, rest assured, in the next video, we begin to explore the foundation of self-care, which is taking care of your physical health. I will share information to help you begin to develop a self-care plan for creating a ***Thriving Mama Mode!***



Taking Care of Your Body



Taking care of your physical health is the foundation of well-being and thriving in motherhood! The first step in moving from **Survival Mode** to **Thriving Mode** is to take care of your body. While it may sound overly simple as a place to start, it isn't.

The three main components of taking care of your body and physical health every day are:

1. Sleep
2. Nutrition & Hydration
3. Movement & Exercise

As important, but not an activity you do every day is routine check-ups with medical providers for physicals, Obstetrician and Gynecologist annuals, dental visits, eye exams and routine check-ins with other medical specialists specific to your individual medical needs (e.g., endocrinologist for thyroid or diabetes, cardiologist, therapist, psychiatrist, etc).



Sleep

The amount of sleep we need depends on our many things, but most importantly, our age. For example, a newborn baby needs 14 to 17 hours a day of sleep, whereas a school-age child needs 9 to 11 hours of sleep. On average, adults require somewhere between 7 to 9 hours of sleep.

And it's not just the amount of sleep you get each night; it's the **QUALITY** of sleep. If your sleep is interrupted and you get woken up throughout the night, or you have no problem getting to sleep but wake up earlier than you want to, and can't get back to sleep, then your *sleep quality* is going to be compromised.

Sleep deprivation happens when a person does not get enough sleep. When a person is sleep deprived, the amount of sleep needed to feel alert and rested increases. Symptoms of sleep deprivation include: experiencing mental fog and reduced attention, concentration, and problem-solving. Chronic sleep deprivation can lead to health issues such as heart disease, high blood pressure, stroke, and diabetes. Sleep deprivation also lowers sex drive or libido, your desire, and interest in having sex.

Losing sleep can create havoc on your mental health, contributing to an increase in depression, anxiety and lowering your ability to use healthy coping skills to manage stress. And, sleep deprivation and chronic sleep issues will also impact your weight. The more sleep you lose, the more weight you could gain. The reason is this: lack of sleep increases hunger and appetite. Which in turn stimulates cravings for high-fat, high carbohydrates and sugar. Sleep is the great equalizer, keeping you in balance and creating a solid foundation of health!



Taking Care of Your Body



How many hours of sleep do you get at night?

less than 4 hrs

4-5 hrs

5-6 hrs

6-7 hrs

7-8 hrs

8-9 hrs

9+ hrs

How many hours of sleep do you need to feel rested? Remember on average most adults need between 7-9 hours a night of sleep.

If you are having trouble with your sleep, please list the reasons or contributing factors. For example, baby/child waking you up, snoring partner/spouse, can't get to sleep, can't stay asleep, etc.

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Are you sleep deprived? If so, please list some of the reasons you are sleep deprived and the symptoms of sleep deprivation you experience:

Reasons for Sleep Deprivation

Symptoms for Sleep Deprivation

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Would you like to improve your sleep? If so, what do you think would make a difference?

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Taking Care of Your Body



Nutrition

I love the saying, food is either fighting disease or feeding it! Equally important is how we use food. Ask yourself this: Do you use food to nourish? As a way to celebrate or reward yourself? Do you use food to escape or cope with and settle feelings and manage stress? Food is something readily available, yet even with all of the information on the importance of choosing healthy food, many people do not make mindful, healthy choices with nutrition.



On a scale from one to ten, how would you rate your nutrition and eating habits? One = *poor nutrition and eating habits* up to ten = *amazing nutrition and eating habits*.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

When was the last time you had close to a 'ten' with nutrition and eating habits? Most of us would say pregnancy. Why is it we take better care of ourselves when growing a baby, but not caring for ourselves? Pregnancy is critical for a baby's development, and so is her mama's health! When was the last time you had close to a 'ten' with nutrition and eating habits?

Are you intentional with the food you consume at mealtime (breakfast, lunch, dinner, snacks, etc.) or is your approach more of a wait until you're hungry and grab what you can or finish what's left on the kiddos plates? How would you describe how you plan your meals, the foods you chose and overall eating habits?

Are you eating enough to maintain energy and health?

Always

Usually

About half the time

Seldom

Never

Please explain and share some of the reasons:



Taking Care of Your Body



Do you tend to overeat, or eat food that isn't nutritionally dense? For example, fast food or high fat, high sugar, snack foods, chips, sweets, food that tastes good and convenient?

Always

Usually

About half the time

Seldom

Never

If so, how often do you estimate?

Everyday

Several times a week

Couple times a week

Couple of times a month

Once a month

Once a week

Please share reasons why you either overeat or consume food that isn't nutritionally dense.

How would you describe your eating habits and food choices?

Very healthy

Mostly healthy

Somewhat healthy

Needs some improvement

In need of a lot of change

My current eating habits and nutrition are influenced by:

Not sure what healthy, nutritious eating looks like/ physical symptoms and reactions to certain foods

Committed to health /medical condition managed by eating certain food

Hungry all the time, strong appetite throughout the day

Eating for comfort/ unhappy with body shape, size

Fear of gaining weight

So busy with kids and life no time to take care myself

Craving junk food, fast food

No appetite/ trying to lose weight

Boredom

Lack of time to prepare food

Other reasons not listed: _____



Taking Care of Your Body



Would you like to improve your nutrition? If so, what do you think would make a difference?

Hydration

Many of us have likely heard how important it is to drink eight glasses of water a day. While there is no scientific research proving the right amount to drink, drinking water throughout the day as well as eating fruits and vegetables with water content, have health benefits to helping our bodies run efficiently. We lose fluid throughout the day, through our skin, breathing, sweat and using the bathroom. When your water intake does not equal what you excrete, you can become dehydrated.

Pay attention to your body cues and be sure you are drinking enough fluids. Important to note, alcohol will not be hydrating and can increase dehydration. Symptoms of mild to moderate dehydration include: thirst, dry mouth (not related to medication side effects), urine that is dark yellow and infrequent use of the bathroom, headache and muscle ache and cramps. Symptoms of severe dehydration include: dry skin, very dark yellow urine, rapid heart rate, rapid breathing, lack of energy, concentration and feeling dizzy.

Do you hydrate, drink enough water throughout the day?

Never drink water

Rarely drink water

Drink some but not enough

Pretty good, but could drink more

Always make sure to drink enough

Are you often dehydrated? If so, do you have any of the symptoms of mild to moderate or severe dehydration? Please list your symptoms:



Taking Care of Your Body



Do you need to improve your hydration? If so, what do you think would make a difference?



Caffeine

Caffeine is readily available and in many products such as soda, tea and coffee, and even some ice-cream and desserts. Caffeine is a stimulant and can have the following physiological effect on your body: increased alertness, energy, heart rate, and blood pressure. Caffeine can also stimulate the digestive system. Sometimes too much with abdominal distress and diarrhea.

For a healthy adult, the daily limit of caffeine intake is between **300 to 400 milligrams (mg) of caffeine per day**. The amount of caffeine in beverages and products varies.

For example, in coffee, the caffeine content in coffee varies depending on the brand, how it is brewed, whether at home or a coffee shop or restaurant.

- 12-ounces of coffee brewed at home can have 50-70 mg
- 12-ounces of brewed at Starbucks has an estimated 235 mg of caffeine
- 12-ounces of Dunkin Donuts brewed coffee has about 180 mg

Important to know; decaffeinated does not mean caffeine-free. Decaffeinated has much less caffeine than regular coffee, however there is still some caffeine in decaffeinated coffee. Decaffeinated coffee from Dunkin Donuts, Panera and Starbucks, (16-ounces), has anywhere from 10-25 mg of caffeine.

Teas have less caffeine than coffee.

- An eight-ounce cup of Black tea brewed has 47 mg of caffeine
- 8-ounces of Green tea has 29 mg

If you are looking for little caffeine, your best choice may be 8-ounces of decaffeinated black tea with 5 mg of caffeine or Herbal brewed tea which have no caffeine.



Taking Care of Your Body



Soft drinks and soda can have as much caffeine as coffee. And not a surprise, energy drinks can have some of the highest amounts of caffeine in a serving depending on the size and concentration. For example,

- On average, a 12-ounce can of soda, whether Cola or Pepsi range from 34 mg to 46 mg
- A 12-ounce-can of Mountain Dew has 54 mg
- Orange drinks and some root-beer has caffeine up to 40 mg of caffeine
- Some 2-ounce energy drinks have up to 200 mg of caffeine and those with 16-ounces can start at around 140 mg and up to 350 mg of caffeine.



How much caffeine do you consume in a day?

None

Up to 100mg

Up to 200mg

Up to 300mg

More than 400mg

More than 600mg

If you are experiencing the following physical symptoms: migraine headaches, trouble sleeping at night, nervousness or anxiety, irritability, digestive upset, and racing heart, it is recommended to look at your caffeine intake, be sure it is within recommended guidelines and if not, reduce the amount of caffeine you consume.



Would you like to improve your caffeine intake? If so, what do you think would make a difference?



Taking Care of Your Body



Alcohol

Alcohol is consumed for many reasons: for enjoyment, for taste, celebrations, to relax, unwind, because of addiction, and to escape, avoid and cope with stress and emotions. I want you to be aware of your reasons for using alcohol. From a psychologists perspective, alcohol use is problematic when you use alcohol to escape, numb or cope with stress, feelings, and situations.

Alcohol use is also problematic when:

- A person exceeds the recommended guidelines for amount of alcohol consumed in a day week or time frame
- A person has physical and emotional cravings for alcohol
- A person develops tolerance, meaning you need more alcohol to achieve the desired effects for your use
- A person experiences negative consequences in their life as a result of alcohol use. For example, problems in relationships, at work, at home and caring for your family and responsibilities and can include legal issues such as drinking and driving and disorderly conduct.

Many people are not aware of what is considered a **serving size** of alcohol. Information from the National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism (NIAA) indicate the following serving size for various alcohol:

- One Serving of Beer = 12 fluid ounces
- One Serving of Malt Liquor = 8-9 fluid ounces
- One Serving of Wine = 5 fluid ounces
- One Serving of Distilled Liquor = 1.5 fluid ounces

The NIAAA's definition of **binge drinking** for women is: 4 or more alcoholic drinks for females on the same occasion. The NIAAA's definition of **problematic drinking** for women is consuming more than seven drinks of alcohol (one drink = serving size listed above) in a week.



How many servings of alcohol do you consume in a week?

None 1 drink 2 drinks 3 drinks 4 drinks 5 drinks
6 drinks 7 drinks 8 or more



Taking Care of Your Body



Do you consider your alcohol use to be a problem?

Occasionally

Yes

No

If so, please explain:

Have you experienced problems in your relationships, at work, or with finances and legal issues because of your drinking or have important people expressed concern about your alcohol use? If so, please explain:

If you answered yes to the last three questions, please reach out to your primary care physician or mental health professional for evaluation and support.



Would you like to change your alcohol use? If so, what do you think would make a difference?



Taking Care of Your Body



Exercise

There are so many benefits to exercise! Regular and frequent exercise routine can increase physical health and well-being and help to manage stress and enhance mental well-being. Some of the benefits of exercise include:

- Increased energy
- Decreasing stress
- Less irritability
- Creates calm and relaxation response
- Reduce and prevent heart disease, stroke, high blood pressure
- Prevents loss of muscle and strengthens muscles through aging process
- Improves sleep
- Boosts sex drive

The U.S. Department of Health & Human Services recommends 30 minutes of physical activity for adults, and 60 minutes for children, at least **five days a week**, which adds up to 150 minutes of exercise a week for adults. Other physical recommendations include strength training two times a week and increasing flexibility. For example, by stretching.



Do you exercise each week?

Everyday Almost everyday Several times a week A couple of days One day a week

In a given week, how many minutes do you exercise?

Never Up to 30 Mins Up to 60 Mins Up to 90 Mins Up to 120 Mins
Up to 150 Mins 150 Mins or more

Other: _____



Taking Care of Your Body



One of the biggest barriers to exercise is finding the time to exercise and being motivated to exercise. What are the obstacles with making exercise part of your routine? For example, not enough time, injury, the expense to join gym, studio or take classes.

If you are interested in starting an exercise routine and haven't done so in a while, be sure to start gradually and build in more activity and clear any new program with your physician, especially if you have underlying health issues and concerns.



Would you like to improve your exercise routine? If so, what do you think would make a difference?



Taking Care of Your Body



Medical Exams and Check-Ups

When it comes to medicine and taking care of your body, there is no one-size-fits all answer; medicine, assessment and treatment of physical and mental health is highly individualized. Having regular appointments with a Primary Care Physician creates a relationship where the physician can support, treat, and counsel the patient based on health history, life issues, stress across the lifespan.

For specialists, such as Obstetrician and Gynecologists (OB/GYN) there are some guidelines. The American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists (ACOG) recommends women to have yearly examination and check-ups to discuss birth control, general health screening, depression screening, sexually transmitted infections screening, address concerns or issues related to sex, hormonal changes, menstrual cycle and changes, preconception counseling, and vaccinations.

Regarding dental visits, the American Dental Association (ADA) stance is there is no one size fits all dental treatment. Some may visit the dentist twice a year for cleaning and check-ups, while others may go more often, depending on the issues and diagnosis. Routine visits to the dentist will not only help prevent specific issues but can help identify issues and concerns to a trained dental provider.



When your last visit to your Primary Care Physician? _____

Have you ever or recently (within the year) had an evaluation to measure cholesterol, a risk for diabetes, high blood pressure, thyroid disease, vitamin D, Iron?

Have you shared with your doctor any vulnerability you may have inherited from family? For example, risk for cancer, mental health issues, substance dependence, other diseases, and issues.

When was your last check-up or physical? _____



Taking Care of Your Body



If you have not been to a primary care physician, please list the reasons:

The American Dental Association recommends routine visits to the dentist. When was your last dental check-up/visit? _____

If you do not have routine dental check-ups, please share the reason why:

Do you make your annual OB/GYN visits a priority? _____

When was your last visit? _____

If you do not go regularly, what are the reasons:



Would you like to improve your visits to medical professionals? If so, what are your goals?



Taking Care of Your Body




Summarizing Your Goals

Thriving Mode starts with a commitment to take care of your physical health and well-being. When you are in **Survival Mode**, the first place to look at making improvements is your physical health. If you are not sleeping, not eating healthy, not adequately hydrated and caffeinated and drinking alcohol, not exercising, then making even small changes in your sleep, eating and activity level can jump-start going from *surviving* to *thriving* for a **Thriving Mama Mode!**

If you get enough rest and sleep, have good activity and exercise, eat fairly well, stay hydrated, limit caffeine and alcohol, and continue to struggle or feel physically off, then a visit to a medical doctor can help rule out any physical issues and concerns and offer solutions. If you are experiencing sleep deprivation or sleep issues and are unable to make changes or have tried to make changes without achieving your desired outcome, please reach out to a medical or mental health professional for evaluation to determine factors and receive support on how to improve your sleep routine.



In this section of the workbook you have been exploring how to take care of your body and physical health. Please take a moment and put all of your goals from each section in the lines below. By doing this, you will be able to see in one place your strengths and areas to improve so you can set goals to take care of your physical health.

 **Goals for sleep:** _____


 **Goals for nutrition:** _____

 **Goals for hydration:** _____

 **Goals for healthy caffeine intake:** _____

 **Goals for healthy alcohol use:** _____

 **Goals for exercise:** _____

 **Goals for medical exams and checkups:** _____



Taking Care of Your Body



Ok, now that you have the summary of your goals from the previous sections, let's create goals that are more specific and detailed. Review the goals you have written in the previous section. Write the goals for taking care of your body that you would like to focus on. Then please go into the paragraph on the following page.

For example, maybe it's been two years since your last OB/GYN, and dental checkup and you want to change this. List this as a goal. And if you want to improve sleep, because you stay up too late, then set a goal to get the number of hours you need to feel rested. And if you skip meals and want to change that, set a goal to plan your meals for the day as you would for your kids.



My goals for taking care of my body and physical health and well-being are:

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

Creating a **Thriving Mode** is all about self-care! In the next video, you'll be learning how to **Take Care Of Your Mind**, manage your thoughts and engage in activities rewarding and meaningful to you. **Taking Care Of Your Mind** is essential in **Thriving Mama Mode**!



Taking Care of Your Mind



Taking care of your mind in motherhood requires three things:

- Managing Your Thoughts
- Engagement
- Flow

In a given day, we have thousands of thoughts. I think when you're a mom, the number is likely even higher- probably closer to 100,000 thoughts a day! And the number of thoughts you have increases by several thousand with each additional child!

So whatever your estimate is, if you are a mom, you have a lot of thoughts every day!

Moms think about what everyone needs, often multitasking and juggling so many things at once for her family, work and responsibilities. This is often called the **MENTAL LOAD**! Which is constantly thinking about what her family needs **ALL THE TIME**!

The mental load is all the behind the scenes **to-do's** from doctor appointments, permission forms for field trips, social events and gifts for parties, organizing play dates and sports practices and activities. It's the to-do list of what her family needs. And it **NEVER** stops! When a mom's mind is **TOO** full, constantly thinking and doing for everyone, this can be a perfect environment for **STRESS**!

There are many ways to describe what we think about in a given day. Thoughts can be: positive, neutral and negative. For example:

Positive Thoughts: Moments of appreciation, gratitude, and caring thoughts towards yourself, your child, your sweetie.

Neutral Thoughts: To-do lists, tasks that you need to accomplish in the day, observing what is happening.

Negative Thoughts: Critical judgmental statements about yourself, others, and your day.

There is a beautiful saying from **Mahatma Gandhi**, in the book **Open Your Mind, Open Your Life: A book of Eastern Wisdom**. And the saying is this:

*Keep your thoughts positive, because your thoughts become your words.
Keep your words positive, because your words become your behavior.
Keep your behavior positive, because your behavior becomes your habits.
Keep your habits positive, because your habits become your values.
Keep your values positive, because your values become your destiny.*

I love this saying because I think it summarizes the power our thoughts have on our lives.

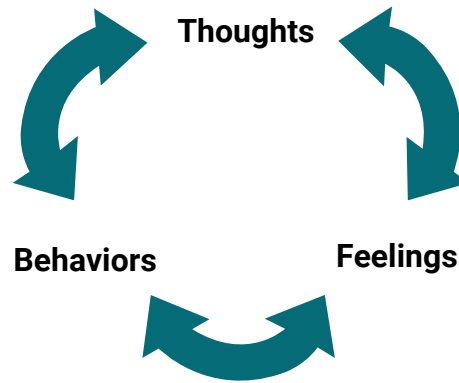


Taking Care of Your Mind



Relationship Between Thoughts, Feelings and Behaviors

As a psychologist, I help clients understand the powerful relationship between our thoughts, feelings, and behaviors. Our thoughts influence feelings and behaviors. Feelings impact behavior and behavior impact thoughts and round it goes.



Here some interesting findings from research on our thoughts:

- People who are depressed have more negative thoughts about themselves, other people, the world and the future.
- A mood state, whether positive or negative, will impact the type of memories recalled. A person who is in a negative mood state will more readily recall negative memories whereas an individual in a positive mood state will remember positive memories.
- People who are under pressure with many cognitive demands have increased thoughts of dying, one of the most reported unwanted thoughts.
- Listening to aggressive and violent songs increased aggressive thoughts and feelings. (Research study of 500 college students listening to violent music lyrics, had more violent and aggressive thoughts.)

Our thoughts are incredibly powerful! Which is why, learning to manage and take care of our thoughts is an important skill in a **Thriving Mama Mode!**



Taking Care of Your Mind



How would you describe the thoughts you have in a given day: _____

How often do you have **positive thoughts**?

Some of the time I have positive thoughts

Occasionally I have positive thoughts

Rarely I have positive thoughts

I never have positive thoughts

How often do you have **neutral thoughts**?

Some of the time I have positive thoughts

Occasionally I have positive thoughts

Rarely I have positive thoughts

I never have positive thoughts

How often do you have **negative thoughts**?

Some of the time I have positive thoughts

Occasionally I have positive thoughts

Rarely I have positive thoughts

I never have positive thoughts

How would you categorize the most frequent things you think about? Check all that apply:

Tasks and to-do's

Thinking about the past

Fearful what if scenarios

Gratitude

Negative self-talk

Recalling pleasant memories

Happy & joyful thoughts

Setting goals

Worries

Sad & lonely thoughts

Preoccupied with future events

Creative Ideas

Re-living situations or events in the past

Other thought category not listed: _____



Taking Care of Your Mind



Next, please review all the checked categories and circle the **top three most frequent categories** of thoughts you experience.

Now, get more specific with your thoughts. Looking at the **top three categories** you circled, write some of the thoughts you have creating stress or disrupting your life or taking away the joy, calm and happiness in motherhood. For example:

- 'I'm afraid I am failing my children'
- 'I am so overwhelmed'
- 'I hate the way my body looks'
- 'My children are so annoying, I hate being around them'
- 'I'm so stupid compared to other moms'
- 'My friends think I'm not a good mom or friend.'

Please list any negative thoughts you have causing stress in your life:

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Taking Care of Your Mind



Cognitive therapists call negative thoughts as faulty ways of thinking, cognitive errors or cognitive distortions. The balance here is this: learning how to identify when you are experiencing a cognitive distortion. Next time you have a negative thought or a cognitive distortion I want you to ask yourself some of the following to see if you can change and shift the thought in a more healthy, accurate way. Some examples on how to challenge negative thoughts include asking yourself:

- Where is the evidence this thought is true?
- Am I overgeneralizing or drawing conclusions based on one situation?
- Is it possible I am thinking about this in all-or-none thinking? Meaning, if something isn't perfect, then it's a failure? Also considered black and white thinking with no shades of grey, flexibility is key here!
- Am I personalizing a situation or taking someone's behavior personally when it may have nothing to do with me?
- Is there an alternative explanation for this thought?
- Am I focusing on the negative and discounting the positive?
- Is it possible I am jumping to conclusions and interpreting things inaccurately?
- If a friend, spouse or my child shared this exact thought what would I say?
- Am I focusing on the facts at hand or starting to move into trying to predict the future with this thought?
- And when our thoughts are self-critical about ourselves, calling ourselves names, or criticizing ourselves, imagine for a second if the thought you are having right now is the same thought your child shared with you about themselves? How would you respond to your child if they shared the same thought with you that you are having right now?

In the space below, take the negative thought from above and show how you can change the cognitive distortion by challenging the thought:

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Taking Care of Your Mind



One aspect of thriving in motherhood is being aware of situations that **trigger** negative thinking. A trigger is something or a situation that sets off a reaction within you. For example when my child doesn't listen, talking with a certain friend or relative, right before my period, stress at work, etc. Please share the situations that **trigger** negative thinking.

When you experience these **triggers**, how do you react? _____

After these triggers, the **feelings** I experience are: _____

After these triggers, the **behaviors** I respond with are: _____

Changing patterns of thinking requires a few things: awareness, understanding and planning alternative ways to respond in the future. What are some alternative ways you can respond to your **triggers** in the future?



Taking Care of Your Mind



Mental Engagement

Taking Care Of Your Mind also includes engagement, which is doing mental and cognitive activities that keep you mentally interested and active. Being **mentally engaged** keeps our minds healthy and increases happiness in life. Some examples can be learning (like taking this course!), reading, puzzles, creating and crafting, photography, art, visiting museums, listening to podcasts and solving problems.

Being **mentally engaged** is an important component of mental well-being.

When do you feel **mentally engaged**? What are the activities that keep you **mentally engaged**? Motherhood can be time-consuming, and if you can't think of any in your life right now, be sure to think back to a time in your life and list those activities you felt mentally engaged. For example, reading, listening to podcasts, visiting museums, watching documentaries, doing puzzles and games, crafting, being creative, connecting with others, charity and community service.

Flow

Experiencing **flow** is another component of taking care of your mind. **Flow** is a concept to describe when we are so engaged in an activity that we lose track of time, where we are and who we are because we are enjoying the activity we are doing. **Flow** has been described as spending hours in an activity, but feeling as if minutes have passed because the activity is so enjoyable and engaging. Some people experience **flow** when reading a great book, crafting, cooking, gardening, writing, art, spending time with friends, and in work/career.

Please list the activities when you have experienced **flow**. If you haven't experienced flow in a while, think back to a time in your life when you did and share those activities below:



Taking Care of Your Mind



When was the last time you experienced **flow**?



Reflecting on what you have learned, please list your self-care goals for *Taking Care of Your Mind*. For example, use kinder self-talk, once a week make time for activity for activities you mentally enjoy, create more flow, talk to a therapist about the pattern of negative thinking, etc.

A **Thriving Mode** is all about self-care! In the next video, you'll be learning **How To Take Care of Your Emotions And Feelings**. As manage your thoughts and engage in activities rewarding and meaningful to you. Taking care of your mind is essential in **Thriving Mama Mode!**



Taking Care of Your Emotions and Feelings



When we are in **Survival Mode**, emotions and feelings can be experienced as overwhelming.

Emotions are strong reactions in the body that impact our physical state. Emotional reactions are instinctive, instantly creating bodily responses to threat, rewards, excitement, fear to name a few.

Feelings are slightly different.

Feelings are sparked by emotions and are influenced by a personal experiences, beliefs, memories, and thoughts linked to a particular emotion. Feelings are reactions to your *internal thoughts* and your *external experiences*. Feelings are closely related to our thoughts. Think of a feeling as how your mind is **perceiving** an emotion.

In motherhood, there are a lot of feelings to experience: the whole gamut of emotions, from joy, happiness, gratitude to boredom, exhaustion, loneliness, insecurity, fear, irritability, anger, rage, and did I mention worry? Oh, so much worry! There is a saying, maybe you have heard it before: “You are only ever as happy as your unhappiest child.” Pretty accurate at times wouldn’t you agree? And while there is oh so much truth here, it doesn’t have to always be so.

“We can feel for our children, and not get swept away by their emotions and behaviors or ours!”

With four daughters in my care, I can tell you this: if I didn’t make managing my feelings a top selfcare priority, I don’t think I could function. Mental health professionals have a fancy word for taking care of your emotions and feelings, and it’s called **Emotional Regulation**. Emotional Regulation is being aware of your feelings and developing skills and strategies to manage how you respond, react, and behave. The key word here is **manage, not control**. We can’t always have control over what we emotionally experience, as discussed earlier, some emotions are automatic and instinctive. But, what we can do is manage how we take care of our emotional responses.

As mother’s we are our children’s first and greatest teachers, how we take care of and manage our emotions and feelings we pass onto our children. It is essential we learn how to take care ourselves first, so we can effectively take care of and teach our children.



What was your biggest takeaway you after watching the video on feelings and emotions?



Taking Care of Your Emotions and Feelings



Check the emotions and feelings you experience most often in a week:

Joy	Calm	Guilt	Embarrassment	Fear
Irritability	Worry	Gratitude	Shame	Disgust
Contentment	Anger	Hopelessness	Happiness	Anxious
Boredom	Frustration	Sadness	Excitement	Regret

Other feeling category not listed: _____

Looking at the emotions and feelings you checked above, do you notice a pattern or theme?

How would you describe what you observe, a range of emotions and feelings? Mostly positive, or mostly negative?

What are the stressful situations in motherhood that you struggle with most? For example, never having time alone, child's needs feel overwhelming, partner/spouse not supportive, getting out the door anywhere, anywhere quickly or without a battle, etc.



Taking Care of Your Emotions and Feelings



How do these examples you gave and situations impact your emotional well-being?

When you are with your child, how would you describe the feelings you experience?

A range of feelings (stressful, pleasant, neutral) depending on the day, situation and task

Mostly stressful

Mostly pleasant

Mostly neutral, going through the motions of the day

Please answer the above question for each child you have in the space below.

How do you manage and take care of these feelings?

When you are not managing or dealing with your feelings, how do you know? Share the types of experiences you have, for example, tension headaches, short tempered, yelling, using screen time to distract, etc.




Taking Care of Your Emotions and Feelings



What are other situations not related to motherhood, but part of your life, that create emotional stress for you?

List all of the ways you manage and deal with your feelings and emotions. For example, talk to friends, exercise, go to therapy, get enough sleep, I don't manage my feelings right now, eat, scroll on social media, etc.

 In the section below, please write your self-care goals for *Taking Care Of Your Emotions And Feelings*. Be specific when you are creating your goals. For example, if you are experiencing anger, maybe a goal is to pause and use deep breathing before you react, or you would like to work with a therapist to understand how to manage feeling, or bring in more positive emotions into your daily life, etc.

A **Thriving Mama Mode** not only includes understanding yourself and what you need to thrive, but also how the significant relationships in your life impact whether you are in **Survival Mode** or **Thriving Mode**. The next video is all about **Nurturing Your Relationships** in motherhood! And how understanding traits of healthy relationships can help reach your goal to create a **Thriving Mama Mode**.



Nurturing Your Relationships



Certain times in life, the ages of our children, the demands in our lives, the busy-ness of life, we can forget to spend time with supportive people in our lives. Motherhood shifts every relationship in our life. And, I don't think of this as a negative change. Instead, the shifts in relationships after a child is part of the season of raising children. And when you know and accept the changes and shifts, you can creatively plan how to nurture the relationships important to you.

Spending quality time with people who are important to you is key to ***Nurturing Your Relationships***. When we don't spend quality time, fostering connection with those we care for, the relationship can feel strained. While there is no one amount of quality time required for a relationship, notice how your satisfaction in the relationship is correlated with the amount of quality time you spend together.

Traits of ***healthy, supportive*** relationships:

- Give and take, mutual support
- Healthy boundaries
- Shared vision, goals, and interests
- Appreciation for differences thoughtful
- Kind, respectful communication and behaviors
- Have fun together
- Compromise: no one only gets their way all the time
- And in romantic relationships a healthy sexual relationship; no one partner is pressured or forced to participate in sexual activity without consent and sex life is enjoyable and frequent.

Traits or characteristics of ***unhealthy relationships*** include:

- Possessiveness and jealousy
- Passive aggressive behaviors
- Aggression-expressed emotionally, verbally, emotionally, and physically
- Put-downs and controlling behavior
- Poor boundaries
- Sarcasm
- Shutting down or ignoring during conflict
- Criticism



Nurturing Your Relationships



Now let's get specific and look at your relationships in more detail. Thinking about your relationship with your sweetie, please check all of the characteristics present in your relationship:

Characteristics present with your Sweetie:

Mutual support	Compromise	Empathy
Healthy boundaries	Appreciation for differences	Kind behaviors
Shared goals	Respectful communication	Fun activities together
Shared interests	Thoughtful behaviors	Trust in the relationship
Respectful behaviors	Healthy sexual relationship	Quality time together
Healthy communication	Working through conflict in a healthy way	

On a scale of one to ten, how supported, connected and happy do you feel in your relationship with sweetie? Please circle the number that currently describes how you feel:

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Not at all supported, connected or happy				About half the time supported, connected or happy				Very supported, connected and happy	

Was there a time in your relationship your number was closer to a ten? If so, what were some of the reasons or behaviors or situations that made this number higher?

What are some of the strengths in your relationship?



Nurturing Your Relationships



What are the most significant sources of stress in your relationship?

Your relationship with your sweetie has many facets and roles. As described in the video, these roles include the supportive friend, companion, roommate, and co-parent.

- **Supportive friend:** Providing emotional and practical support when you need it.
- **Companion:** Spending time together in range of activities, from chores to fun outings and exercise, etc.
- **Room-mate:** Being responsible for chores, tasks to keep the household running smoothly including bills, cleaning, maintenance of home, cars, etc.
- **Co-parent:** Supportively work together in shared way regarding caring for children, including discipline, expectations, follow-through etc.

Would you describe your relationship with your sweetie having these categories? Please list the strongest roles, and you can have more than one, the roles need some improvement, and the roles that are currently absent from your relationship:

Strongest Roles

Roles Needing Improvement

Roles Currently Absent

<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
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How often do you spend quality time with your sweetie?

Daily

Weekly

Monthly

Rarely

Never



Nurturing Your Relationships



What are some of the areas you want to improve with your sweetie? For example, if you do not have some of the qualities of a healthy relationship checked in the boxes above, you can turn these traits of a healthy relationship into a goal.

*If you notice a pattern of stress, ongoing sense of dissatisfaction or you feel unhappy in your relationship with your sweetie, please consider reaching out to a mental health professional for support and counseling. Share your thoughts with your sweetie and begin to work through the stress to improve the relationship. Going to couples counseling is a coping skill and self-care behavior, for both you and your sweetie. Also, be sure to check out the skills, strategies and research on improving your relationship with your sweetie by visiting **Drs. John and Julie Gottman** at the **Gottman Institute**, at Gottman.com.*



Friendships

When you think about your friends, please check all of the qualities below present in your relationships. While the number of friends may vary, consider the friends you spend the most time.

How would you describe your friendships? Check all that apply:

Empathy	Trustworthy	Fun together
Healthy boundaries	Conflict worked through in a healthy way	Compromise
Shared interests	Respect for differences	Dependable
Mutual support		
Trust in the relationship	Healthy communication	Non-judgmental



Nurturing Your Relationships



Friendships in motherhood are important. It is not uncommon to want to have more friends or friends to connect with friends in a more genuine way or have friends with shared interests.

If you are struggling to make friends, keep friends or spend time with friends, please check all of the challenges you have with friendships:

No time for friends

Friends don't have kids

Insecurity gets in the way

Isolated in community

Kids are different ages

Financial issues

Different schedules

Anxiety gets in the way

Don't live near one another

No one to watch kids

Other reasons not listed: _____

How often do you spend quality time with your friends?

Daily

Weekly

Monthly

Other: _____

Is there anything you would like to change regarding the amount of time together?

What are the strengths of your current friendships? For example, friends who are supportive, give advice, kids the same age, have fun together, etc.

What are some of the things you would like to improve in your friendships? For example, spend time together, text even when busy to touch base, once a month outing, find friends with shared interests, etc.



Nurturing Your Relationships



Children

As mothers, our role is take care of our child/children. Modern mothering is complex; caring for our child and all of the accompanying roles and responsibilities that go along with raising a family. Many mothers feel exhausted, physically and emotionally, creating stress and strain in every day living. While we may want to spend more time with our child, it can often feel challenging to do so with all of the demands and schedules.

An unhealthy dynamic between child and parent is when we look to our children for emotional support or overwhelm them with our issues, worries, and concerns. And, critical in mothering is to be aware of how the developmental age and stage our child is going through, will impact how they interact with us, their family, friends and larger world.

Spending quality time with our children every day helps to create secure attachments and bonding. Setting limits, boundaries and creating clear expectations in a supportive nurturing environment is the foundation of healthy parenting. In mothering when we are overwhelmed or dealing with life stressors we may lose sight of the healthy components of child-parent relationships.

Check all of the qualities below you have between you and your child.

Respect	Responsive to child's needs	Clear expectations
Quality time together	Supportive	Clear rules
Warm and loving	Clear boundaries	Loving, kind and clear communication
Value of independence	Understanding of child development	

Knowing our strengths in motherhood is essential. Being able to acknowledge our strengths helps to build confidence, develop wisdom, enhances self-awareness and helps to create a foundation of well-being in mothering. Knowing our strengths in motherhood also gives us perspective in challenging times. What are your strengths in motherhood?



Nurturing Your Relationships



What are some of the areas in mothering that you struggle with most or may be challenging to you?

Do you spend quality time with your child every day? If you have more than one child, answer for each child.

How much quality time do you spend together? For example, do you spend 15 minutes of quality time a day, two hours a day, mostly on the weekends because of full-time work, rarely any because you're so busy and your child is in many activities?

What are some activities you do together? For example, reading, playing, puzzles, playing sports together, talking, etc.

If you are not satisfied with the time you spend with your child, what are some of the reasons the time shared is not enjoyable? For example, many responsibilities during the day, work, other children, exhaustion, child's behavior, etc.



Nurturing Your Relationships



What are some of the goals you have to improve or work on your relationship with your child? For example, spend more one on one time, put down the phone when with my child, limit multi-tasking when with my child, teach him/her a new skill we can do together like cooking, etc.

If you observe many of the boxes are not checked, or realize you need to bring more connection with your child, or have an interest to strengthen healthy parenting, please reach out to a mental health provider who specializes in family counseling and parenting support and learn how you can increase these healthy traits with your child. Reaching out to gain support and learn the skills for effective parenting is a self-care skill for you and a healthy relationship skill for you and your child. So much of parenting we have to learn along the way and having a trusted, supportive counselor can be a valuable relationship and gift to give yourself.

Also, be sure to check out the fantastic parenting resources from **Dr. Lauara Markham** at AhaParenting.com and be sure to listen to my interviews with Dr. Markham about parenting and sibling relationships at **In-Session with Dr. Claire**, available on iTunes.



Family of Origin Relationships

Reflecting on your family of origin, the family you grew up with, please check all of the qualities below present in your relationships.

Below, please check all of the qualities present in your relationships in your family of origin:

Good communication	Respect for one another	Empathy
Healthy boundaries	Appreciate differences	Mutual support
Flexibility	No favoritism	Autonomous life, healthy inter-dependence, connected to family
Spending quality time together	Conflict managed in a healthy way	

Other reasons not listed: _____



Nurturing Your Relationships



How would you describe the overall quality of the relationships you have with your family of origin?

Healthy and supportive,
clear boundaries

Stressful situations but overall
supportive and good boundaries

Frequent stress, strain, and
conflict, but supportive at times

Lots of conflict and stress,
unhealthy boundaries, rarely supportive

Estranged or cut off from
family due to many reasons

Other reasons not listed: _____

What are some of the strengths with your family of origin? For example, provide emotional support, child care, good boundaries, have fun together, etc.

What are some of the challenges you have with your family of origin? For example, intrusive in my life, demanding of time, critical with parenting or critical towards sweetie, etc.

How do, if at all, these challenges contribute to stress in motherhood?

How often do you spend time with your family of origin and/or extended family? Because this is so varied, please fill in:



Nurturing Your Relationships



What are some of the goals or ideas you have to improving relationships within your family of origin? For example, setting stronger boundaries, prioritizing spending time with them even with a busy schedule, communicating feelings and working through conflict, etc.



In-Law Relationships

Reflecting on the relationship with your in-laws, please check all of the qualities below present in your relationships:

Good communication	Respect for one another	Empathy
Healthy boundaries	Appreciate differences	Mutual support
Flexibility	No favoritism	Autonomous life, healthy inter-dependence, connected to family
Spending quality time together	Conflict managed in a healthy way	
Other reasons not listed: _____		

How would you describe the overall quality of the relationships you have with your in-laws?

Healthy and supportive, clear boundaries	Stressful situations but overall supportive and good boundaries	Frequent stress, strain, and conflict, but supportive at times
Lots of conflict and stress, unhealthy boundaries, rarely supportive		Estranged or cut off from family due to many reasons
Other reasons not listed: _____		



Nurturing Your Relationships



How often do you spend time with your family of origin and/or extended family? Because this is so varied, please fill in:

What are some of the strengths with your family of origin? For example, provide emotional support, child care, good boundaries, have fun together etc.

What are some of the challenges you have with your in-laws? For example, intrusive, demanding of time, critical with parenting or towards sweetie.

How do, if at all, these challenges contribute to stress in motherhood? For example, fights with sweetie, feeling insecure, anxious, feeling judged, etc.



Nurturing Your Relationships



What are some of the goals or ideas you have to address or work on these issues or concerns? For example, setting stronger boundaries, prioritizing spending time with them even with a busy schedule, encouraging your sweetie to directly interact, communicate, plan with their family, expressing feelings, and working through conflict, etc.

As we wrap up this section, please reflect on the most supportive people, whether family or friends, or professionals, who are the most supportive people in your life. These are the people who you can go to when needing support, help managing stress, and in times of celebration and to have fun. Please list the supportive people in your life below:

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Often, when we are in **Survival Mode**, we get so overwhelmed with what we have to do, or what is in front of us, that we can forget to prioritize connecting to important people in our lives. What are some of the ways you can connect with relationships most important to you? This can include, sweetie, children, friends, extended family and in-laws. For example, make time to call, text or reach out weekly to friends, schedule date night with my sweetie once a month, plan a girls night with my friends, spend time with family.



Nurturing Your Relationships



Reflecting on the awareness from these exercises, please list the goals for *Nurturing Your Relationships*. Be sure to consider goals you may have with your sweetie, children, friends, family of origin and in-laws. You do not need to have goals with each relationship, instead, create goals authentic and meaningful to YOU! For example, increase quality time with child by 30 mins. each day, schedule date night once a month, ask friends to get together, etc.

In the next video and section of the workbook, we're going to have you reconnect and explore the many ways to **Nurture Your Soul** in motherhood! Often, the busy-ness of motherhood can place activities and practices that **Nurture Your Soul** on the back burner. However, these activities and practices are essential, even if in small ways to help to create and maintain a **Thriving Mama Mode!**



Nurturing Your Soul



Nurturing Your Soul in motherhood includes engaging in activities that you enjoy, restore your energy, and bring you a sense of joy, calm and happiness. **Nurturing Your Soul** also includes finding purpose and meaning in your life, practicing gratitude and mindfulness. And, **Nurturing Your Soul** also includes spirituality.

Spirituality is a word many hear and immediately think of religion or religious practice. Spirituality is broader than this association. From a psychologist's perspective, spirituality is having a sense of connection to other people, including those in one's community, the larger world, ancestors, and relatives who have passed on.

Spirituality is all about connection. Feeling and being connected to nature, expressing gratitude and having compassion for oneself and others. Spiritual moments can include having a sense of purpose in one's life through a role, with one's skills, abilities, and life experiences. If you are practicing religion, then participating in religious ritual, prayer, and services can create another layer of spirituality, deepening spiritual well-being.

Being a mom is a lovely and all-encompassing role, and it doesn't mean you have to lose yourself or let go of what nurtures your soul. Finding ways to nurture your soul, staying connected to the parts of you before you became a mom, **is possible** while caring for and raising a family. Nurturing your soul is specific to you, your interests, passions, and personality. No two paths are the same. But what is essential is to know yourself and be aware of what you need and what brings you joy, calm, and happiness in motherhood.



Growing up, the activities, talents, abilities and interests I participated in included:

The activities that **Nurtured My Soul** before I was a mom included:



Nurturing Your Soul



Activities that fill my soul, recharge my energy, and bring me joy include the following:

How often do you make these activities a priority in your life?

--

How can you bring these activities into your self-care routine? What would be needed to make these activities part of your life again?

Please share the caring and supportive people in your life, past or present, who inspire and encourage you to make time for activities that nurture your soul.

For many people, **spiritual practices** creates a sense of joy, calm, happiness in life. Remember, spiritual practices can include but does not have to include religious practices and rituals. Spirituality is a connection to nature, oneself, others, the world, ancestors, loved ones or mentors or inspiring people who have passed. Please share some examples of meaningful spiritual practices in your life:



Nurturing Your Soul



Self-care goals for *Nurturing Your Soul* are important components of creating a *Thriving Mama Mode*. Some goals for nurturing your soul can include: creating a practice of gratitude every day, making time for activity once a week I used to enjoy, spending time in nature with hike once a month, having my morning tea outside listening to birds, practicing meditation, etc. Activities that *Nurture Your Soul* are highly personalized and specific to you! Be thoughtful and creative with setting even small goals to take care of you! Please share your goals for Nurturing Your Soul.

Now that you have the foundation of what is needed to ***Thrive in Motherhood***, we are going to explore in the next video and segment of the workbook ***How to Manage Stress and Improve Coping Skills***. Remember, the goal of creating a ***Thriving Mama Mode*** is not to take away stress, but to learn how to cope and manage the stress, which we are going to cover next!



All About Stress & Coping Skills



In this segment, we're focusing on the impact of stress and the importance of coping skills, or strategies to help reduce, manage and work through stress so you can thrive in motherhood. Stress can be described as:

- **Positive stress:** which is motivating, maybe exciting and helps you to accomplish goals and meet deadlines and positive stress is often short-term
- **Negative stress:** is the opposite, far from motivating, negative stress can be brief or chronic and chips away at mental, physical, emotional and social well-being.

First when you hear the word **stress**, I want you to understand the key is how we categorize and understand stress. We make appraisals about stress based on our **perception** of stressors. Meaning, what may be stressful for me may not be for you or another person. So much like our feelings, as we discussed in a previous section, stress is about our appraisal of a situation. Second, stress is influenced by the intensity, frequency, and duration of it. Simply stated, how long stress goes on and how intense the stress is and is often it happens. And third, the amount of support and resources we have to manage stress also impacts our stress levels. Do we have a supportive partner, spouse, friends, and family to help us during stressful times? Do we have the resources, including financial and having the time and flexibility to deal with stress and work through it when it happens?

One of the first things to do to move from **Survival Mode** to a **Thriving Mode** is to understand your stress, and be aware of what contributes to your stress levels. Moms say the phrase, 'I am so stressed,' a lot. But have you ever paused to ask yourself what you are so stressed about? The following exercise is helpful because it gives you an overview of the stressors in your life. Creating awareness of the stress in your life is the first step in moving into the next phase of managing the stress, which is to devise strategies to work through the stress.



What are the current stressors in your life right now? Check all that apply:

Financial stress	Recent move	New baby
Legal issues	Marital stress	Job loss
Volunteering	Change in friendships	Child leaving home (for example, shared custody, college)
Personal Health Issues Family Member Health	Job change	Increased responsibility at work or home
Conflict in family	Promotion at work	Other: _____



All About Stress & Coping Skills



As shared in the video, stress can be positive (good changes, opportunities or exciting events or situations) or negative (life events, situations resulting in difficulty, strain, and a decline in everyday life). Please look at the checked boxes from the previous section and place the stress in your life into either category, positive or negative stress.

Positive Stress

Negative Stress

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As you look over the list, what patterns do you notice?

How would you describe your stress level: low, medium or high stress?

Would you describe the stress in your life as short-term or chronic, more long-term and on-going?

Do your loved ones and friends know when you are stressed? If so, what have they shared with you?



All About Stress & Coping Skills



While stress is a word describing a situation or circumstance in your life, our response to stress is an important component of how we manage stress. Knowing and being aware of how stress impacts your physical, mental, emotional, social and spiritual wellbeing of your life is essential. When you are aware of the impact of stress in your life through these symptoms you experience, you can learn to identify the signs of stress and add in behaviors and coping skills to help manage, reduce and cope with the stress.

When you're feeling stressed what are the **physical symptoms** experience? Check all the boxes that apply:

Feeling achy	Change in appetite (increase or decrease)	Increase in pain	Stomach upset
Diarrhea	Constipation	Muscle tension	Chest pain
Rapid heartbeat	Tension in jaw	Grinding teeth	Headaches
Fatigue	Sleep problems	Migraines	Nausea
Colds and illness	Back pain	Tense shoulders and neck	High blood pressure
Nightmares	Loss of interest in sex		

Other physical symptoms you experience not listed: _____

When you're feeling stressed, check all of the **mental or cognitive symptoms** you experience. Check all the boxes that apply:

Anxious thoughts	Problem with memory	Worry	Difficulty concentrating
Focusing on the negative	Errors in judgment	Forgetfulness	Loss of motivation
Confusion	Boredom	Difficulty making decisions	Impulsive



All About Stress & Coping Skills



When you're feeling stressed, check all of the **emotional symptoms** you experience.

Irritability	Moodiness	Restlessness	Difficulty relaxing
Irrational fears	Depression	Unhappiness	Sense of loneliness
Apathy	Anger	Mood swings	Feeling overwhelmed

Other emotional symptoms you experience not listed: _____

How does stress impact **your relationships**?

Isolate	Slow to respond to texts and calls	Cancel plans	Increase conflict and arguments
Insecure	Fears of being abandoned	Personalizing behavior	Ignore texts and calls

Other stress-related symptoms experienced not listed: _____

How does stress impact how you **nurture your soul** and **spiritual connections**?

Anger towards others	Cynical	Judgmental	Anger towards self
Loss activities that nurtured you	Blaming	Limited or no prayer	Minimal expressed gratitude
Limited or no compassion for self	Limited or no compassion for others	Limited or no sense of purpose	Not practicing gratitude

If practicing religion, then rituals of prayers and attending services reduced or no participation in these activities

Other spiritual symptoms of stress you experience not listed: _____

As you finish checking how stress shows up as symptoms, what was your most significant understanding or take-away after doing this exercise?



All About Stress & Coping Skills



Coping Skills

Coping skills are the activities, behaviors, and skills you use to manage and deal with stress. Coping skills can be healthy, neutral or passive and unhealthy. I like to view coping skills on a continuum, from healthy, to not so healthy, and everything in between.

Here are some things to consider coping skills:

- A coping skill that works for you may not work for someone else
- You have to know yourself, be aware of what you need, and what works for you
- Coping skills can get overused, or lose effectiveness when stress is prolonged
- A range of coping skills to use and choose from helps to strengthen and broaden your ability to manage a variety of stress in intensity, frequency and duration.
- Coping skills evolve and can change over time

Coping skills can be understood as self-care skills and defined broadly as:

- Healthy coping skills help reduce and manage stress and create an ability to thrive and improve health and well-being in all areas of your life.
- Passive coping skills, do not actively work on addressing stress and when overused, can be a symptom of avoidance.
- Unhealthy coping skills, do not help to reduce and manage stress and can intensify, complicate and create more stress as well reduce health and well-being in all areas of your life.



All About Stress & Coping Skills



Take a few minutes and think about the coping skills you use most often to manage stress and improve well-being. Check all of the coping skills you use when feeling stressed:

Deep breathing	Exercise	Taking a walk	Positive self-talk
Focus on gratitude	Negative self-talk	Meditation	Journaling
Eat to calm down	Play a musical instrument	Talking to a counselor or therapist	Sleep
Take a nap	Drink alcohol	Clean and/or organize	Play with pet
Scroll on phone	Watch movie or show	Shop	Play video games
Read	Creative arts (draw, paint, craft, etc.)	Dance	Use humor
Play music	Reach out to supportive people	Sing	Cry
Take a bath or shower	Ask for hugs	Pray	Give to others
Argue	Spend time in nature/outside	Garden	Stretch or do yoga

Other coping skills used not listed above: _____

Look through the list of boxes you checked, and categorize the coping skills you use into the following categories of healthy coping skills, passive coping skills and unhealthy coping skills.

Healthy Coping skills

Passive Coping skills

Unhealthy Coping skills

_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____



All About Stress & Coping Skills



As you look over the list, ask yourself does one column of coping skills stand out? What pattern do you notice? Is there a range of coping skills? Share your thoughts and observations:

Do your loved ones and friends know when you are stressed? If so, what have they shared with you?

How was stress handled growing up in your family? Please share a few of the coping skills used and/or encouraged:

How did your family of origin and experiences growing up and into adulthood teach you what to do, or what not to do, when it came to coping with stress?



All About Stress & Coping Skills



Have you thought about the coping skills you'd like to teach your child to manage stress as they move through life? What coping skills would you like them to have?

As you wrap up this section on coping skills and stress, my goal for you is that by answering these questions, you have to have an awareness of how you experience stress and the coping skills you use to manage stress. Being aware of how stress impacts you physically, mentally, emotionally, socially, and spiritually, can help you identify stress sooner and bring in coping skills to reduce and manage stress. When it comes to coping skills, I want you to be mindful on the range of coping skills you use. For example, if you mostly use passive or unhealthy coping skills, then a goal to consider is to strengthen healthy coping skills. Or, if you have mostly passive coping skills, it is important to know you're setting yourself up for overwhelm and staying in **Survival Mode** instead of **Thriving Mode**.



Now that you have reviewed this section, what are your goals for strengthening your coping skills and managing stress? What would you like to add in and improve? For example, looking for signs of physical, emotional, mental stress, taking care of myself every day, reducing alcohol use, increasing healthy coping skills like exercise and journaling, reducing passive coping skills like scrolling on social media/phone, napping whenever overwhelmed, etc.

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We've covered a lot in this course, and you are ready to **Create Your Plan to Thrive!** The next section and two videos are detailed and will help you map out and create your **Thriving Mama Mode** Plan!



Creating Your Thriving Mama Mode Plan



You signed up to take this course, you've invested time and energy to watch videos or listen to the downloads, and you've been reflecting and examining ways to move from **Survival Mode** to **Thriving Mama Mode** by completing a lot of exercises in this workbook! I am so proud of you! Now, it's time to create YOUR roadmap to thriving in motherhood, which begins with a plan!

There are no shortcuts to thriving which is why it is so essential for you to take the time and write down your goals to thrive. You may have the thought, 'I'll just think about my goals,' that will help me thrive in motherhood. Thinking about something, while important, is a start, but writing goals moves the thought into action. Here's why: Creating a plan to thrive takes an abstract desire and turns it into a concrete statement- seeing it on paper, evidence in physical form as your willingness to creating a **Thriving Mama Mode**!



Remember:
A Goal without a Plan
is just a WISH!

Taking care of yourself doesn't require large amounts of time or require a lot of money. Creating a plan to thrive in motherhood requires asking yourself every day:

What is the one self-care act of love I can do for myself?

Maybe if you are short on time, support and resources, it can be as simple, yet powerful such as to talk to yourself kindly, as you would to your child or anyone else.

Thriving in Motherhood is:

- A commitment to self-care
- A willingness to be creative with finding time for self-care
- A desire to honestly look at the strengths you have, the areas that need improvement and suspend judgment, you have toward yourself
- An understanding thriving isn't about perfection or making mistakes, it's a journey of self-growth and courage to take risks!

As you have progressed through the course, watching videos and completing the exercises, you have noticed at the end of each topic and section there are questions highlighted in blue if you printed in color, or a lotus if you printed in black and white. The goals you identified and wrote in each of these areas and sections need to be copied below on the **Thriving Mama Mode** Goal Worksheet for each section need to be copied below. The intention is to have an overview of all your goals from the course on one page.



Creating Your Thriving Mama Mode Plan



If you don't know where to start with creating a plan, no worries! We're going to start with your scores from the quiz: [*How is Your Well Being and Self-Care?*](#) and work our way through the goals you mapped out in each topic area and section. As you begin the worksheet, turn to the page next to the goal question and copy your goals in the space provided. Once you have copied your goals on the worksheet, you are ready to move to the next phase of creating your plan to thrive, which is identifying the goals to start with first and the steps needed to make your goals a reality to create a **Thriving Mama Mode!**



Let's start mapping out your plan! Go back to each section in the worksheet and copy in your plan to thrive on the **Thriving Mama Mode Worksheet**.

My results from the How is Your Well-Being and Self-Care? quiz: Copy scores found on page 7.

Taken on date (M/D/Y): _____ / _____ / _____

Physical Self-Care: _____ **Social Support:** _____

Mental/Cognitive Self-Care: _____ **Spiritual Self-Care:** _____

Emotional Self-Care: _____



If you could improve your Self-Care, where would you start? Copy goals listed on page 13.



Creating Your Thriving Mama Mode Plan



My goals for Taking Care of My Body are: Copy goals listed on page 29.



My goals for Taking Care of My Mind are: Copy goals listed on page 37.



My goals for Taking Care of My Emotions And Feelings are: Copy goals listed on page 41.



Creating Your Thriving Mama Mode Plan



My goals for Taking Care Of My Relationships are: Copy goals listed on page 54.



My goals for Nurturing My Soul are: Copy goals listed on page 57.



My self-care goals for strengthening my Coping Skills and Managing Stress are: Copy goals listed on page 65.



Creating Your Thriving Mama Mode Plan



Once you have completed the goals worksheet, you can move onto the next step, which is creating a detailed plan on the goals you are going to start with and move into an action plan. Now that you have your general goals in front of you, the next step is to create specific, measurable steps to work towards and achieve your **Thriving Mama Mode!**

As we move into creating specific goals, the first place I want you to start with is making an assessment of your physical health and taking care of your body. As you've heard me say throughout this course, your physical health is the foundation from which all else is built upon. This includes three core tasks:

- Getting enough sleep
- Getting proper nutrition and hydration
- And exercising regularly

If you're not taking care of your body, then it is very challenging to thrive in motherhood! Taking care of your body is the first step for any mama!



Step 1: Take Care of Your Body.

I want you to look at your score from **Physical Self-Care** section from **How is Your Well-Being and Self-Care?**

What is your Physical Self-Care score? _____

If you have solid physical self-care skills, and scored **HIGH PHYSICAL SELF-CARE** then you are ready to add in other self-care goals.

But, if you have **NO, LOW or MEDIUM physical self-care scores**, then I would suggest starting with making improvements with your physical health routines.

Your physical health and well-being are the foundation of thriving in motherhood, so let's be sure you have a strong foundation to build upon!



Creating Your Thriving Mama Mode Plan



For those of you who have scores in the **no, low or medium physical self-care** score, I want you to pause for a minute and ask yourself this:

- What area in Taking Care of Your Body and Physical Health needs attention?
- Is it your sleep? Do you need more sleep?
- Is it your nutrition? Are you not eating enough, not planning your meals, eating for comfort or to manage stress?
- Are you not hydrating yourself? Do you need to drink more water?
- Are you not making exercise a priority?
- Are you drinking too much alcohol?

Identifying where to **START** in taking care of your body is essential! Thriving in motherhood is correlated with creating a solid foundation of physical health. And it can look different for everyone. Taking care of ourselves is highly individualized, meaning there is no one size fits all. And, there is no right or wrong way to start with your goals. Rather, I want you to be intentional, know yourself, and know what you need to move from **Survival Mode** to **Thriving Mama Mode**.

Remember self-care is a practice, a commitment to begin taking care of yourself to create more joy, calm and happiness in motherhood. So, the great news is: you can start with one area and build upon it, and you can also choose a goal from each area to work on. There is no right or wrong way to start with your goals. Instead, be intentional, know yourself and what you need to feel improvements, which help build momentum, energy, and encouragement.

Step 2: Identify Goals.

Once you have identified how to improve **Taking Care Of Your Body**, you can move on to focusing on additional goals.

If you are taking care of your physical health well, that is fantastic and you have a great foundation to build upon. You can begin to add in goals from any area.

For those of us who need to start with taking care of your physical health, I want you to identify **one** to **two** areas in physical health we've outlined and start with the goals that will give you the most **impact** to jump start your well-being.



Creating Your Thriving Mama Mode Plan



Once you have identified goals for taking care of your body, you can move onto other areas to identify goals to begin working on.

You can move through each topic area and choose a goal within the areas we've covered. Or maybe that feels overwhelming to you, which is why I like to frame goals this way:

Choose goals that:

1. Ground you
2. Nourish you
3. Help you
4. Heal you
5. and Facilitate Growth

Specifically, chose a goal that will **Ground You**, think of this goal as the foundation self-care skills you need every day that helps you stay in a **Thriving Mode**.

Next, chose a goal that will **Nourish You**.

Now this goal could be literal, such as improving what you eat, when you eat and making sure your eating nutritionally dense food. Or, this can be choosing a goal to nourish and nurtures your soul, like improving gratitude, spending more time in nature, or being mentally engaged and make a commitment to do activities that bring you joy, such as hobbies or activities you may have put on hold for a while.

Next, chose a goal to **Help You**.

Think of this area that is going to reduce the stress in your life. For example, do you need to have better boundaries with your time? Do you need to learn to say NO to extra obligations, activities and responsibilities. Are you saying YES to things when you really don't want to? Then a goal to help you would be to learn to have stronger boundaries with your time.

Or maybe something that would help you is to talk with your sweetie and let them know you need them to do more or share the mental load of raising a family, by perhaps dividing household tasks, chores or parenting. Speaking up, using your voice, and letting others know what YOU need to help



Creating Your Thriving Mama Mode Plan



you is an important skill to develop. Skim through the goals you have on the summary page and ask yourself: Is there a goal in one of these areas that would help me create a plan to thrive, write it down.

Next, chose a goal to **Heal You**.

One thing I know about being a psychologist, is this: slowing down and paying attention and learning about our thoughts, behaviors, feelings and experiences can stir up a lot of pain or create sensitivity or a feeling of rawness. When we open our hearts and minds and look to improve our state of being, it can bring into our awareness some areas of in our life that were painful or not exactly how we wanted it to be or how it currently is.

Take a deep breath on this one, if you can relate to what I am saying. please know you are not alone!

For example, maybe as you've taken this course, you have awareness that your relationship with your mom or dad, or childhood experience impacts you in your day to day mothering. Making the decision to get support from a counselor to help you Heal some of the pain would be a wonderful goal for you.

OR, one of your goals is to have more kind self-talk, because when watching the video, ***Taking Care Of Your Mind***, you realize your negative self-talk is pretty constant and you want to change that. Setting a goal to talk to yourself more compassionately and stopping the negative self-talk would be incredibly healing.

Be gentle, kind and compassionate to yourself and know what you have covered in this course can shift the way you experience things, and that is ok. Be good to yourself and get the help and support you need if you feel more vulnerable or overwhelmed.

And last, choose a goal to help **You Grow**.

I think being a mom is the ultimate **Growth** Challenge. I have grown more as a person, being a mom, caring for, and raising my daughters. They are truly my greatest teachers, showing me lessons and teaching me about the world and parts of myself I didn't even know I needed to learn. Being a mother creates so many opportunities to facilitate Growth.

Look over the list of goals in front of you and ask yourself as you at the different areas we've covered, is there a goal here that would help you Grow as a person?

This could be related to mothering or be broader.



Creating Your Thriving Mama Mode Plan



In summary, start with identifying and creating a goal with the areas to improve with your physical health, then chose meaningful goals to include:

1. Ground you
2. Nourish you
3. Help you
4. Heal you
5. and Facilitate Growth

All of these components and goals will help you create a plan to move from **Survival Mode** to a **Thriving Mama Mode!**

Write these goals on the **Thriving Mama Mode Goal Worksheet**. Next we'll begin to look at the specific steps to take to achieve your goals. I have included the **Thriving Mama Mode Worksheet** as a separate download, so you can make multiple copies for ongoing inspiration! Now that you have identified a few goals, let's look at creating an action plan towards achieving the goal.

Step 3: Describe the Steps.

A key objective when working toward a goal is to create measurable, actionable and specific steps to reaching your goal. Be specific about how you are going to achieve the goal. If your goal is to get more sleep, and hope each night you do, you may not achieve your goal. But, if you get more specific, and list the steps to get more sleep, then you are going to be more likely to achieve this goal. Steps towards a goal are about setting an intention and creating a map to follow to get to your goals which means breaking down the goals into achievable steps and planning than in your schedule and calendar.

Step 4: Supports to Achieve Goal.

When thinking about your goals, it is essential to reflect on what will help you reach your goals. Talking about your goals with your sweetie and supportive people in your life provides not only encouragement when you need it, but also practical help if you need company along the way for the activities. And reaching out for support can include securing child care to help make your goals a reality. Supports are also practical things: like estimating the time you need to complete a step toward your goal, planning it on the calendar and schedule, creating a budget if there is a cost, and setting reminders on your phone. When thinking about your goal ask yourself this: ***Is there something needed to make this goal happen?***



Creating Your Thriving Mama Mode Plan



And remember to create realistic goals! For example, if you want to increase physical activity, but finances are limited, and you really can't afford right now a gym membership. If you pushed off your goal of getting more physically active until you could join a gym, that might not be in your best interest. Instead, joining a gym could be a long-term goal, but the short-term goal is to increase exercise with what you have available to you. Walking, creative strength training downloaded from the hundreds of affordable apps on the phone or watching a YouTube video (free) maybe the steps you need to take right now to achieve the goal.

The next few pages are going to be super helpful providing examples and ideas on how to address concerns, identify goals, and create the steps needed to create and achieve your ***Thriving Mama Mode Plan!***



Creating Your Thriving Mama Mode Plan



Goal setting is highly individualized. To help you with the process, here are some examples of goals and steps toward achieving the goal. If you feel uncertain about the steps to making a goal happen, reach out to a supportive person to brainstorm some ideas. And be sure to join the private Facebook group ***From Surviving to Thriving in Motherhood*** community a supportive place where you can ask for ideas and get support! Read through these examples and then take some time to fill out your ***Thriving Mama Mode Worksheet***.

Concern: Only getting about 6 hours of sleep.

Goal: Aim for 7.5 hours of sleep.

Steps & Support: Create a wind-down bedtime routine starting at 9:30 pm.

Read before bed.

Lights out 10 pm.

Set a reminder on the phone at to head to bed at 9:30 pm.

Turn of shows/stop scrolling on screen 1/2 before bed.

Leave the family room and head to the bedroom.

Leave the phone on the dresser instead of the near bed.



Concern: Not prioritizing meals, mostly eating whatever is available. Need to drink more water!

Goal: Plan meals, pack lunches for work, hydrate more.

Steps & Support: Menu plan one morning a week.

Make a list of meals and ingredients needed.

Share the list with a sweetie (who does grocery shopping).

After kids in bed, when making lunches, pack a lunch for me.

Bring some healthy foods to work and in the car like protein bars, water, and nuts.



Creating Your Thriving Mama Mode Plan



Bring a reusable water bottle and drink one bottle full by lunch.
Refill and drink the second refill by kiddos after school activity.
Share goal with sweetie for meal planning.



Concern: Haven't been to the GYN or Primary Care Physician in over three years.

Goal: Schedule annual GYN exam, annual and dental appointments.

Steps & Support: During a break, call offices to make an appointment.
Call a girlfriend or supportive person, share goals to prioritize health.
Set a reminder on the phone to remind me to call during the break.



Concern: Consuming too much caffeine, impacting sleep and increasing anxiety.

Goal: Reduce caffeine.

Steps & Support: Limit caffeine intake to 300-400 mg of caffeine.
Replace the fourth cup of coffee with decaffeinated coffee or herbal tea or water.
No caffeine after 1 p.m., increase water in-take.
Keep track of symptoms: Am I sleeping better? Do I have less anxiety?
Re-evaluate in one week, may need to consider replacing the 3rd cup of coffee the second week with decaf/herbal tea.
Brew coffee at home.
Purchase some new flavorful drinks.
Fill reusable water bottle two times during the day.



Creating Your Thriving Mama Mode Plan



Concern: Stopped working out after being sick, now its been three months since I exercised!

Goal: Exercise to three times a week, 30 minutes each time. Long walk once a week with a friend.

Steps & Support: Look at the calendar/schedule exercise every Sunday night.

Plan out the times to exercise.

Child's nap time is the best time to exercise.

Have a backup plan for exercise to do if something unexpected comes up.

Put an exercise app on the phone with quick 7 minute workouts.

On lunch break at work go for a brisk walk even if only for 15 minutes!

Reach out to friend and plan a walk once a week.

Bring kiddos in the stroller on a walk.



Concern: Chatter in my head is super negative about myself :(

Goal: Stop Negative self-talk.

Steps & Support: Be aware of situations that increase negative self-talk.

Monitor thoughts for negative self-talk.

Change negative talk into a phrase of compassion.

Talk to self as I would talk to my child or friend.

Highlight my strengths.



Concern: Super bored with the same activities and responsibilities every day.

Goal: Be more mentally engaged.

Steps & Support: Start reading again!

Chose a book to read.

Read every day 15 mins before bed.



Creating Your Thriving Mama Mode Plan



Listen to a kid-friendly podcast in the car.

Download podcast.

Set a reminder on my phone for reading time.



Concern: Irritable and angry and I feel so bad about it. My anger is impacting relationships in a negative way.

Goal: Learn to manage anger.

Steps & Support: Reach out to a counselor for support to work on anger and stress management.
Call primary care physician or look at the insurance network for the mental health provider.
Research self-help book on anger to read.
Talk to supportive people in my life and let them know what is going on.



Concern: Feeling isolated and want more friendships.

Goal: Make some new mom friends.

Steps & Support: Look in my community for library story time, moms groups and other activities that are interesting to me.
See if there are moms with kids close to my child age that live nearby, or go to the same school.
Reach out and initiate a play date for child and mom too.
Go to a moms meet-up.



Creating Your Thriving Mama Mode Plan



Concern: Barely connecting and talking to my sweetie because of parenting and work is so busy.

Goal: Talking with sweetie every day in a meaningful way.

Steps & Support: Set aside fifteen minutes a day to connect and share with sweetie.

Plan a date night once a month, take turns planning.

No multitasking when chatting, no scrolling on the phone, no tv, hoping for quiet kids?!

Share with my sweetie my goal.

Show up and make it happen!



Concern: Lots of stress and conflict with my family of origin.

Goal: Let go of the drama with my family .

Steps & Support: Set boundaries with family.

Stay out of back-talking.

Be thoughtful and kind with my words.

Talk to a counselor for help on how to move past these patterns of behavior.



Concern: I don't express gratitude at all, I focus on what's not working.

Goal: Bring gratitude into my every day .

Steps & Support: Get a journal and write what I am grateful for every Saturday morning.

Set a reminder on my phone for this, I only need 15 minutes.

Every day ask myself to look for things to be grateful for.

Express my gratitude to those I care about.



Creating Your Thriving Mama Mode Plan



Concern: Not a lot of activities to nurture my soul, used to love painting, but no time anymore.

Goal: Find time for activities that nurture my soul.

Steps & Support: Once a week spend one hour on an activity I enjoy: painting, drawing or playing the piano.

When the kids are in practice, I will make this my creative time instead of cleaning.

Family meeting to have the kids and sweetie and I clean together.



Concern: Not many coping skills, too many passive coping skills.

Goal: Use more healthy coping skills.

Steps & Support: Set a limit for screen time.

Download an app that tracks the amount of time on my phone.

Reduce my time on the phone by 2 hours the first week.

Instead of watching the screen when upset, focus on practicing breathing or reach out to a friend.

Make an appointment to check in with my counselor and work on these skills for a few months.



Concern: Sweetie and I do not agree on parenting, we do not have same parenting approaches.

Goal: Improve co-parenting and support one another with parenting.

Steps & Support: Talk to sweetie about my concerns and move into action plan together.

Purchase two parenting books.

Read one chapter a week and discuss with each other.



Creating Your Thriving Mama Mode Plan



Identify a few goals to support one another and work together.
Consider counseling sessions (6-8 sessions) with counselor to work on
parenting support.



Creating Your Thriving Mama Mode Plan



Thriving Mama Mode Goals

A quick reminder: keep your goals specific, time-limited, measurable, realistic and be sure it is something you want to do!

Concern: _____

Goal: _____

Steps & Support: _____



Concern: _____

Goal: _____

Steps & Support: _____



Creating Your Thriving Mama Mode Plan



Thriving Mama Mode Goals

Concern: _____

Goal: _____

Steps & Support: _____



Concern: _____

Goal: _____

Steps & Support: _____



Creating Your Thriving Mama Mode Plan



Thriving Mama Mode Goals

Concern: _____

Goal: _____

Steps & Support: _____



Concern: _____

Goal: _____

Steps & Support: _____



Overcoming Obstacles



An obstacle is something that blocks or hinders your ability to progress and reach your goals. In motherhood, it may seem as if there are obstacles everywhere getting in the way of making your self-care a priority. In creating and putting your plan to thrive into action, it is important to have an overview of obstacles briefly.

The five obstacles I have seen in my life, with my friends, and with clients are the following:

- Poor Boundaries
- Perceiving Time as Scarcity
- Lack of Support
- Limited Finances or Resources
- Negative Mindset

Remember, an obstacle is a temporary barrier between your goals becoming a reality. Sometimes you pause, other times you regroup, and often you may need to find another way. But whatever the obstacle, please don't believe it or give into it. Obstacles do take time, creative problem solving, patience and a willingness to take a breath and move through it, around it, over it, under it or toss it to the side. And just because you pause something, doesn't mean it has to be that way forever!



Obstacles in my life that get in the way of self-care and **Thriving Mama Mode** include:

Having poor boundaries	Old patterns and behaviors	Mindset of not enough time
Lack of support	People pleaser	Exhaustion
Giving too much to others	Too much responsibility	Mindset self-care is not something you need to do
Too much time on screen or phone	Trouble with time management	Not knowing what I need

Other obstacles to self-care experienced not listed: _____



Overcoming Obstacles



Some examples of when I have experienced an obstacle and the strategies used to overcome these obstacles include:

Share some of the ideas or ways you can address, reduce, or remove the obstacles that can arise in your path to thrive:

<hr/>	<hr/>
<hr/>	<hr/>
<hr/>	<hr/>
<hr/>	<hr/>

When I've encountered obstacles in the past, these go-to behaviors or skills that help me overcome obstacles are:

<hr/>	<hr/>
<hr/>	<hr/>
<hr/>	<hr/>

The supportive people in my life to reach out to when feeling stuck or dealing with an obstacle include:



Managing Setbacks



A setback is different than an obstacle. While there are some similarities, obstacles are challenges to overcome, while setbacks are a reversal in progress. If an obstacle is a pause, a setback is a stop. In motherhood, setbacks are things that bring you back to **Survival Mode**.

Common setbacks on your journey to thrive in Motherhood can be:

- Disruption to your schedule, most often prolonged
- Loss of motivation
- Losing momentum
- Falling back into survival patterns
- Stressful events paired with ineffective coping/self-care skills

A setback brings you back a few steps or places and reverses the progress you made. You can feel discouraged, overwhelmed and take a 'Why did I even try?' or 'Why did I even bother?' mentality. From a psychologists' perspective, don't give your power, hope, and progress to a setback. Instead, shift into a flexible mindset, viewing a setback as *awareness you've fallen back into old patterns or behaviors*.

I want to offer this piece of wisdom about a setback, while a reversal in progress is never easy, and can feel quite discouraging, when and if it happens, shift into a mindset of curiosity. Ask yourself:

- *What does this setback teach me about myself?*
- *What did I learn from this setback?*
- *And, is there something I can do going forward to reduce the likelihood of this setback happening again?*

If so, be sure to write it down, journal the wisdom and keep perspective. Recovering from a setback is recommitting to your intention and goals; with active problem solving and goal setting, you can be back on your way to thriving.

Sometimes a **SET-BACK** means you need to **SIT-BACK** and understand and learn from the situation before you regroup move forward.



Managing Setbacks



In motherhood, some examples of a setback can include situations listed below. Please check all of the setbacks you have experienced or could be potential setbacks.

Child is sick

Vacations

Excessive stress

Busy at work

School

Loss of childcare

Summer time

Not feeling motivated

You become sick

Busy helping others

Conflict with in-laws

Sweetie travels

Arguments with loved ones

Falling back into survival mode patterns

Mental health issues such as depression or anxiety

Conflict with family of origin

Other setbacks not listed: _____

When you experienced a set-back, how did you get through it? What strategies did you use to move forward?

What is the most challenging part of having a setback?



Managing Setbacks



Moving Past Setbacks

Moving past a setback can be challenging. It is important to remember the first step in moving past a setback is to learn from it. Next, observe the setback with some detachment. Meaning, look at the circumstance, situation, behavior or reaction with objectivity, but don't personalize or make more of the setback. Third, reach out to supportive people for encouragement and help and finally, find creative solutions to getting back on track and make the decision to move forward.

Reaching out to supportive people can be helpful in moving forward after a setback. Please list the people in your life who are able to help you, offer encouragement and support:



Summary & Conclusions



Congratulations on completing ***From Surviving to Thriving: Creating a Thriving Mama Mode With Joy, Calm, and Happiness!*** You have given yourself a gift of self-care by working through this course, learning more about yourself and setting goals for what you need to thrive in motherhood! As with any journey, this is a process, the beginning of a practice of caring for yourself or strengthening caring for yourself in motherhood.

One of the goals with this course is to be able to recognize the situations and symptoms of when you are in ***Survival Mode*** and make the necessary adjustments to increase coping skills and self-care to move into a ***Thriving Mode***. The goal isn't to avoid being in ***Survival Mode***, because as we've discussed, every mom at some point or another, or many points of time, depending on what is going on with her children, family or life stress, will find herself in ***Survival Mode!*** The key learning is to know yourself and find ways to self correct when you're overwhelmed and move back into ***Thriving Mama Mode***.

One of the last exercises I want you to do for this course is to complete the following worksheet. While you have access to the videos to re-watch and have completed the workbook exercises, I want you to have a summary, a list of your goals, encouraging words, perspectives, and statements available to you. Please complete and print out. Hang this up somewhere where you can see it daily or where you can go to when you need a reminder. Fill it out the responses as you would to your future self when she needs some perspective. Bring in your wise self and send your future self a note of love and compassion to give her perspective when she needs it in the journey of the most cherished gift she has, being a mother.

From my heart to yours, I want to express my gratitude to you, for allowing me, to be part of your journey to *thrive in motherhood*.

YOU are the reason I brought this course to life!

In the work I do, I have seen up close and personal how important and sacred it is to be a mother.

I want you to know, you are not alone on this journey in motherhood. I want you to know, that you can care for yourself and care for your family and you don't have to choose between the two!



Summary & Conclusions



I want you to know that,

You matter so very much.

You matter to your children even on the days when you don't think you do.

You matter even when you don't think you have any more energy to care for your family.

You matter even when you're doubting everything you're doing, fearful somehow you're failing at being a mother.

You matter when you've made a mistake and when you love your family with every breath in your body.

I want you to know, YOU matter more than you can ever know!

Thank you for being part of the course I have enjoyed sharing information and my expertise with you and would love to hear from you about how this course has impacted you on your motherhood journey. Please reach out and share with me and the community.

I am sending you all of the best energy, intentions and self-care inspiration as you continue on your journey. May you thrive with love, compassion, and self-care!

Dr. Claire





Thriving Mama Mode: Self-Compassion Reminders

I am enough.

I am more than enough.

Even on days when I struggle the most, I matter.

I matter even when I am doubting myself and when I am
having a tough day, watching the clock until bedtime.

I matter more to my children even on the days I don't think so.

I matter when I've made mistake or had a setback.

I matter more than I know on these days and in these moments.

**5 Self-Care
Skills that
keep me in
Thriving Mama
Mode:**

- ◆
- ◆
- ◆
- ◆
- ◆

Coping skills and strategies to reduce stress:

- ◆
- ◆
- ◆
- ◆

**When I need a boost, the supportive
people I can reach out to:**

- ◆
- ◆
- ◆
- ◆

Joyful memories in my life include:

- ◆
- ◆
- ◆

**When Stressed, Remember: Breathe. Count to 10.
Before you speak to yourself or others ask yourself:
Is it Kind? Is it True? Is it Necessary?**

**Self-compassion
is giving ourselves the
same kindness, empathy
and love we give to others.**

Obstacles and setbacks are part of life. I can
move through and around pauses, reversals,
and stops in my Motherhood journey are:

- ◆ ◆
- ◆ ◆

I feel happiness when:

- ◆ ◆
- ◆ ◆