

The Calm Collective

THE SIMPLE GUIDE TO EVERYDAY SELF CARE



FROM THECALMCOLLECTIVE.COM

CREATING YOUR BEST LIFE THROUGH SLOW AND MINDFUL LIVING

INTRODUCTION

One of the most powerful actions we can take as individuals is to acknowledge the value in taking care of ourselves and doing what we need to do in order to be at our best. Trust me, I've been to rock bottom more than once due to lack of self care, and the moment I started to believe that self care is anything but selfish, my entire life changed. My blog, The Calm Collective, is an every day reflection of that change, inspired by the desire to help people create their best life through slow and mindful living.

This guide was created to help you incorporate healthy patterns into your day to day. I understand firsthand how overwhelming it can feel in the beginning- and more importantly- how to stick to it. Studies show a habit takes just twenty one days to form. I encourage each one of you to apply this simple guide to your every day for twenty one days, and reflect on how you feel. I'm living proof that positive habits can transform a life- and I want that for you, too. So, let's get started!

SET YOUR ALARM FOR THE SAME TIME EVERY DAY



I wake up at 7:30 each morning, but I always ensure that I get 8 hours of sleep since this is what my body needs to feel it's best. Be flexible with what this looks like for you.

I don't always pop right out of bed and start my day; rather, I've gotten very good at listening to my body. Some days this might mean I'm in my workout clothes by 8am. Other days, I'm answering emails and writing in bed until 9:30 with my coffee while listening to music.

SIDE NOTE: Even if you work a standard 9-5, this is still attainable for you. If a slow, relaxed morning is something you desire, be sure to plan what time you'll need to get to bed in order to get a full night's sleep and still have time to embrace a slow morning, and get ready for your day without the chaotic rush.

PRO TIP:

Set your [coffee maker](#) on a timer to help wake you up. Mine begins brewing at 7:15, so that by the time 7:30 rolls around, I'm enticed to get up, stretch my legs, and drink some beloved caffeine.

For a limited time only: That Calm Life mug available [here](#).

DRINK YOUR VEGGIES



This has been a huge game changer for me. Alongside my breakfast (usually a couple of eggs and an avocado) I make a smoothie that is 3/4 spinach, 1/4 fruit. I feel so much better moving forward in my day knowing that I've gotten a mega dose of greens in my body, and it gives me extra energy to boost.

SIDE NOTE: You can also get on the Kombucha bandwagon. I have a glass of this every day after my breakfast. A couple of key benefits to kombucha: it's high in probiotics (great for your gut health) and high in antioxidants, which help to fight free radicals.

PRO TIP:

I learned this from my friend Megan, but if you buy the 1L bottle of Kombucha rather than the individual bottles, you save some major pennies. Also, if you're trying to quit caffeine, a glass of Kombucha is a great way to jump start your day and give you natural energy.

GET MOVING



I know. Nothing ground breaking. You've heard this time and again- and for good reason! Not only does exercise get your blood flowing, but it releases endorphins, too. It's also the quickest way to quiet and clear my mind of any mental clutter I might be holding on to.

My favorite workout of all time is Pilates. It fits with my lifestyle in that it's all about slow, concentrated movements rather than fast paced exercises. I'm still breaking a sweat after each class, and truthfully I've never seen results as quickly as I do when I take a reformer class (reformer = pilates machine). When I'm not doing pilates, I'm pushing myself at an Orange Theory class. 60 minutes of intense cardio that releases any and all stress that I might be carrying.

PRO TIP:

Make an early morning workout easier by placing your workout clothes next to your bed (read: no excuses!). Also, if you can sign up for classes that require you to cancel within 12 hours of booking, you're more likely to commit to going to the class when you know you'll lose money if you don't.

TURN YOUR BATHROOM INTO A SPA



A couple of ways that I do this is by adding battery operated “twinkle lights” and candles on my counter top. It adds a calming, special feel to an otherwise ordinary space in the house. I almost always keep the lights off aside from the twinkle lights and candles when I shower, regardless of the time of day. It relaxes me in such a major way.

Also, the quality of your towels can make a huge difference. You don’t need to invest in expensive towels, but pay attention to the material when you shop. Places like Home Goods and TJ Maxx have AMAZING deals on great quality brands that provide a luxurious feel without the price tag.

PRO TIP:

I like to add essential oil to the floor of my shower. When the hot water hits the oil, it releases the scent and creates a really peaceful experience. I generally use [peppermint](#), [eucalyptus](#) or [lavender](#).

HAVE AN ORGANIZED CLOSET TO SPEED UP GETTING DRESSED



You don't have to have a minimal closet in order to live simply and thoughtfully. Instead, focus on a curated, organized closet to save time and energy. This makes getting dressed less of a chore when you're not sifting through your entire wardrobe to find that perfect outfit.

PRO TIP:

I organize my clothes by season and color. If I want to wear a dress, I know to look at the left side of my closet. If I want to wear a sweater, I know exactly where to look. I even organize my jeans by shade. That may sound Type A (which I am!), but it cuts my getting ready time in a significant way. I would much rather spend my time with my dog, talking on the phone with a loved one, writing for my blog or reading a good book.

You can also try this [*fool proof closet hack*](#).

KEEP YOUR PHONE ON VIBRATE



I've been doing this for years, and it's been such a game changer. After my dad passed away, and it wasn't crucial for me to be attached to my phone all the time, one of the first things I did was switch my cell phone to vibrate. I'm easily overwhelmed by spontaneous phone calls and highly active text threads, so it's super beneficial to my mental space to have silence, and throw myself into conversations when I'm ready and feel prepared.

PRO TIP:

You can also turn your phone on Do Not Disturb and set times for this to happen automatically. Mine goes on from 10pm-7am each day.

MAKE CERTAIN DAYS FOR CERTAIN TASKS



I just started doing this both personally and professionally, and it's helped immensely. While I still do a little bit of everything each day, I have more of a game plan as to where majority of my energy will go.

My week looks a little something like this:

Monday | A heavy writing day for me with blog posts.

Tuesday | I'm generally out shooting on this day and will also run my errands (groceries for the week, car wash, etc) I also ensure that my errands are all within the same neighborhood so I'm not driving around all day.

Wednesday | This is generally my editing day where I binge Friends episodes on Netflix, wear workout clothes, and batch edit my photo shoots.

Thursday | I focus a lot on bookkeeping, finances, and my budgets - both personally and professionally.

Friday | This is more of a low key writing day so that I have enough content going into the next week. I also do a giant hard drive backup from what I've worked on that week. I usually wrap up work around 3pm.

Saturday | I focus on seeing friends and catching up with family.

Sunday | I rest. Nothing more, nothing less. *#rhymes*

EMBRACE HAPPY HOUR



Even if you don't drink, embrace that you've made it through majority of your work day.

Celebrate the little milestones and I promise it will make all the difference. Generally around 5pm, I'm changing the kind of music I'm listening to (more upbeat), I'm opening up some windows for fresh air or going on a short walk with Jasper. I'll pour myself a glass of wine and make a small plate, and lightly continue working on my tasks before closing my laptop (usually around 6pm). Again, happy hour doesn't have to include wine, or even cheese! It can be anything from taking a bubble bath (my favorite place to meditate), opening up a good book, sitting up on your roof top deck, browsing your favorite blogs or simply calling up a friend.

PRO TIP:

Set an alarm for the same time every day to remind yourself it's time to take a break and change your work flow. It's so easy to get caught up in our to-do lists in a society that thrives on being busy, so giving yourself the reminder that you deserve to slow it down is a great pattern to get into and will soon turn into a habit.

W I N D D O W N



For me, this looks like lighting a LOT of [candles](#) in my home, turning on all of my [twinkle lights](#) and opening my blinds to let in the city lights from the skyline. I never have any overhead lighting on when dusk approaches; instead, I lean into the time of day and embrace it. When I'm cooking, the only lights I use are my under-cabinet lighting and my stove light (set to low). It's so much more calming!

PRO TIP:

If you have kiddos and lighting a bunch of candles makes you nervous, consider the [flameless candles](#) that look incredibly real. Most of them also have timers, so they'll go on and off at the same time every day!

TAKE A SHOWER OR A BUBBLE BATH BEFORE BED



Bubble baths are my favorite thing on the planet. Nothing calms me more, and as I mentioned above, it's my favorite place to mediate. Fill your bath with [epsom salts](#) (lavender is my go-to), which are great for relaxing your muscles from the day. I'll usually have my hair up in a clip and use this time to apply a face mask. [\(this is my favorite\)](#)

PRO TIP:

Dim the lights, light a candle, purchase a bath table and include your favorite indulgence - whether that be wine, chocolate, Swedish fish, etc. Give yourself a little treat, and open up a good book or peruse Pinterest for the next 30-60 minutes, uninterrupted.

BUY SOFT SHEETS AND INVEST IN A GOOD MATTRESS



Ensuring that your room is a place you can't wait to retreat to at the end of a long day is essential! God forbid a fire ever break out, because you'd find me trying to take my [Heavenly Mattress](#) with me- I've never slept better in my life. When designing my bedroom space, I also took time to ensure I was buying soft sheets and blankets. That may sound silly, but material on our skin is such a natural way for us to remain calm, relaxed and at ease. [These are the ones that I have](#), and they stay so soft even after multiple washes.

PRO TIP:

Use a calming spray to set the tone for your room before sleep. Lightly spray this onto your pillows, your sheets, and your comforter. I recommend lavender as it's a natural calming scent ([this is the one that I use](#)) A little goes a long way!

FALL ASLEEP TO WHITE NOISE



You may not think that you need white noise while you sleep, but I still encourage you to try it. I have a table fan that I use, but in addition I turn on my Brainwave app. A friend told me about this during her trip to Iceland and said they used it every night to get good, solid sleep. A number of ambient sounds are available; each night I fall asleep to Deep Sleep Rain and Thunder setting. You can set a timer as well (I generally do the full 8 hours).

PRO TIP:

If you have a TV in your room, get rid of it. I know that might sound major, but I promise you it's only hurting you. The lights from the TV prevent you from getting REM cycle sleep, and depending on what you're watching, it can hijack your dreams (Law and Order SVU, anyone?!). If you're keeping it around for a time when maybe you're under the weather and you want to just lay in bed and watch Netflix (been there), simply substitute your laptop.

FINAL THOUGHTS

I hope these simple suggestions resonate with you, and that you take the time to invest in yourself by incorporating these changes into your every day. I know how powerful these actions have been for me, and I hope they will be the perfect jumpstart to living your best life revolved around slowing down and being more mindful. Here to offer love nudges if you need them! As always, I'm here to offer love nudges whenever you might need them.

PS: I encourage you to [sign up for the weekly newsletter](#) (where you'll receive your FREE desktop wallpaper download) to get attainable tips and tricks on how to leave the chaos behind once and for all - and start living your best life. And lastly, I'm over on [Pinterest](#) pinning lots of (simplified) inspiration.

CHEAT SHEET



Set your alarm for the same time every day



Drink your veggies in the morning



Get moving



Turn your bathroom into a spa



Organize your closet



Keep your phone on vibrate



Designate certain weeks for certain tasks



Wind down for the day



Embrace Happy Hour



Bathe before bed



Invest in good bedding



Sleep with white noise