

MANAGE YOUR ENERGY AND MASTER YOUR RHYTHM



About this workbook

At everywoman, we deliver a range of innovative products and resources that unlock the potential and talent of women in business globally. Whether you're just starting out, looking to progress your career, or even to build and develop your own enterprise, the everywomanNetwork provides a wealth of personal development resources, advice and inspiration to address the challenges you face at key stages in business. We produce workbooks on topics that matter most to our members and we're constantly listening to your views to give you the tools you need to propel you through your life's work, at a time and place that suits you.

*Welcome to our workbook, **Manage Your Energy and Master Your Rhythm.***

This workbook is designed to get you thinking about your own energy, exploring what motivates you, excites you and drains you — and what shifts you may need to make you feel more focused and balanced in all areas of your life. You'll learn how your energy levels work, and how you can harness this knowledge to feel more in control of how you function.

Mindfulness plays a huge role in your energy levels — helping to bring about a happier, healthier mindset. We'll draw on some mindfulness strategies and evidence-based tools to help you uncover your own self-awareness.

We've designed this workbook to be as interactive as possible, so that you get real personal value. Our exercises will help you understand your own internal rhythm, what structures have worked for you so far and what you can build into your every day. They will also help you channel the power to shift your perspective and attitude during times of change and uncertainty. There are strategies on how to build and maintain long term positive habits. At the end of the workbook you will be guided to set your intention of manifesting your best, most energised self.

We'd love to know how you get on – email us at karenmax@everywoman.com or tweet us [@everywomanuk](https://twitter.com/everywomanuk).

Max & Karen
and the everywoman team



EXERCISE

Before we begin this work, it's essential to be in a calm, quiet space and create the right environment to journey through this workbook.

Let's start by...

Finding a quiet space where you feel relaxed and removing any distractions (phone, laptop...)

Getting comfortable – have a comforting drink nearby, sit at ease and well supported by cushions or pillows.

Having a notebook and pen handy – studies show that writing things down helps to cement our thoughts and make them happen.

Start where we mean to go on

Now that we are sitting comfortably, let's centre ourselves to connect and bring our best, most open selves to this exercise.

Read through this short breath practice first, then close your eyes and follow the breathing as best you can remember it. If at any point you forget or your mind wanders off, simply come back to your breathing and concentrate on taking slow, steady breaths in and out of your nose.

With your eyes closed, sit with a straight spine, shoulders relaxed, head up, hands resting in your lap, and begin by taking a long slow inhale through your nose to the count of 1... 2... 3... 4...

And then slowly exhale to the count of 1... 2... 3... 4... 5... 6...

Repeat this several times, each time slowly breathing and then pausing at the top of the breath before releasing the breath and exhaling.

Every time you inhale, draw the breath all the way into your nose, your throat, your lungs and chest and see if you can send it all the way down into your belly.

As you exhale, be aware of any tension in your body you can release. Perhaps your shoulders can drop slightly, your back can soften against whatever it is resting on, your hands can relax.

After a few rounds of this, come back to your normal breath, and slowly open your eyes.

Now we can begin!

Creating a mindful practice for a happier, healthier mindset

What does it mean to be mindful?

Take a moment to note down what 'mindfulness' means to you.

Before we look closely at this, let's explore first what being 'mindless' means. Some examples are:

- Getting lost in thought.
- Getting carried away with your thoughts
- Going on autopilot.
- Action without thought.
- Letting your mind wander.
- Being in a conversation, then realising you haven't heard what the other person is saying.

What does the word 'mindless' mean to you?

Can you think of a time you were operating on autopilot or lost in thought and unaware of what might be going on around you?

Write down three situations when you haven't been paying attention to what's happening around you and realised afterwards:

1.
2.
3.

Can you remember how you felt when you realised you may have missed / lost / forgotten something?

Can you imagine how it made anyone around you feel? (Maybe it was someone talking to you and you weren't paying attention)

Being mindful

A great description shared by the founder of modern day mindfulness Jon Kabat-Zinn is:

“PAYING ATTENTION IN A PARTICULAR WAY: ON PURPOSE, IN THE PRESENT MOMENT, AND NON-JUDGMENTALLY.”

Mindfulness allows us to take a small step back from the noise and chatter in our heads and create some space in the present moment. By connecting fully to the present, we simply aren't able – in that moment – to ruminate on the past or worry about the future or think of the million things we feel we need to be doing.

Mindfulness creates space for us to:

Be compassionate to ourselves – we can grace ourselves with understanding and love to accept that some days may be harder to practice being mindful than others.

Accept our experiences as they are – even when we don't like what has happened.

Let go of the need for things to be a certain way – either our practice, life situations, challenges, physical or emotional state.

Be curious about why we do things a certain way and be open to other ways of being and seeing situations.

Be kind and compassionate in how we deal with others.

Trust that we are going through a process and that we are creating good habits, even on challenging days.

Show gratitude through acceptance of our current situation, appreciating positive experiences and the gifts we have right now.

Above all, see things from a fresher and clearer perspective – creating some space between you and your thoughts allows you to see experiences in a different light.

When we are mindful we are fully connected to our present moment. This could be in something as small as brushing our teeth or washing our hair in the shower (tasting the toothpaste, or smelling the shampoo, feeling our hands massaging our scalp) or something bigger like walking and noticing the trees and sky above us, running and really paying attention to the feeling of our feet hitting the pavement or the sound of our breath.

Can you think of three situations when you have been really present and 'in the moment?'

1.
2.
3.

Can you note down how you felt in those situations?

Write down any physical sensations you can remember:

Write down any emotional sensations you can remember:

What is one activity you can commit to doing here that allows you to be mindful and aware of the present and that creates some of the positive sensations you noted above?

Raising awareness of your internal rhythm

In this workbook we are specifically looking at how you can manage your energy to work to your best abilities, what structures work best for you and what you can take forwards to build into your every day.

By creating this self-awareness of our bodies, our emotions, and how we feel in any given moment we can support ourselves to recognise what being mindful actually feels like and how we can work to our optimum energy.

Your daily energy

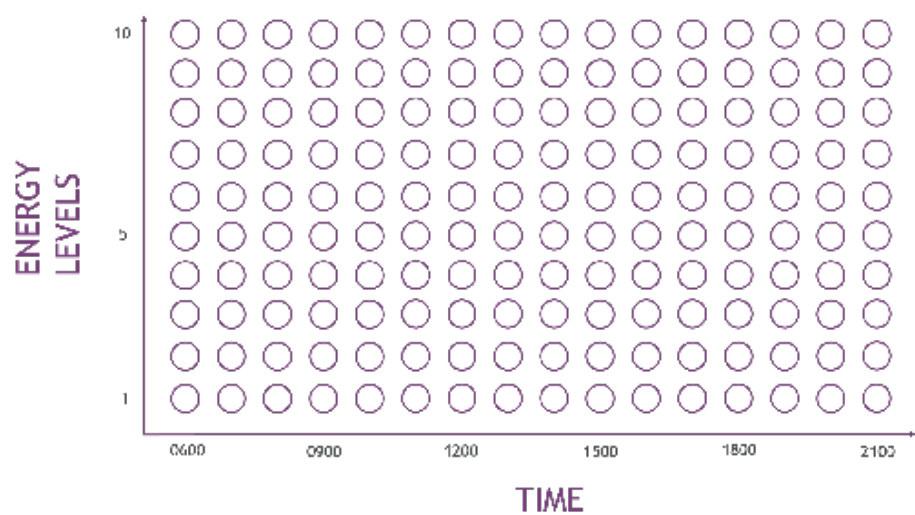
We all have different up and down points and need to bear those in mind when planning our day. Take some time to answer these questions and work through the exercises.

Write down three things you struggle with around getting things done or feeling overwhelmed.

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

When we can understand our energy levels throughout the day, we can align different tasks to when we have the most energy.

Understanding your energy levels



Look at this Energy Levels chart and mark your energy level on a scale of 1-10 for each hour of the day. For example at 06.00 you may have low energy - so perhaps a 4 - or you may bounce out of bed and be an 8. More information below.

- Don't overthink this, just think about your average day and how your energy feels at each time.
- Use this for the next week to track how you feel at certain points of the day to give you a good idea of when your energy is low and high.
- It is perfectly normal to have several energy highs and dips in one day – there is no right answer, we all have different rhythms and physiology so you may have the most energy at 11pm and that's fine!

Now, think about these questions and see if they can help you better identify how you work.

What does rhythm mean to you?

What does routine mean to you?

Which do you prefer?

What do you find hard when creating a routine?

When do you have the most energy?

What have you noticed from the energy chart to be aware of and what can you keep track of?

Now think about which tasks you want to assign to different points in the day. It may be that you do more routine tasks when energy is low and more taxing work when you have high energy.

What work can you do in low energy periods?

What work can you do in high energy periods?

My ideal rhythm

Can you write down your ideal daily rhythm and routine thinking about your energy?

For example, a walk in the morning to clear your head and start the day fresh, a mid-morning break and doing an activity or making a cup of tea, finishing work and doing something to mark the end of the day.

My ideal routine

How does it feel when you look at your ideal day?

Think about what gives your day structure - this might be the time you wake up/start work/exercise/eat

We will look at what habits can help support this later on in the workbook!

Shift your perspective and attitude during times of change and uncertainty

“YOU CANNOT CONTROL WHAT HAPPENS TO YOU, BUT YOU CAN CONTROL YOUR ATTITUDE TOWARD WHAT HAPPENS TO YOU, AND IN THAT, YOU WILL BE MASTERING CHANGE RATHER THAN ALLOWING IT TO MASTER YOU.” BRIAN TRACY, AUTHOR.

How we manage our energy impacts how we think, feel and behave. It also impacts how we react to the situations around us, so often our energy is a reason we can feel overwhelmed with change because we are depleted and so changes affect us more deeply.

How can you master your energy to focus on the present and stay in control of your response? **Our most powerful tool is our breathing.** In any given situation we can master our response and our energy by connecting to our breath and bringing ourselves into the present moment.

You can use a short grounding breath exercise at any time to move from a place of doing to a sense of being. It can support you when you feel anxiety or stress or simply need a pause in your busy life.

Take a few moments to look back at your ideal daily energy rhythm and see where you could introduce a short breathing exercise to allow yourself some space and refocus.

Managing overwhelm

When you think of feeling overwhelmed, what comes up?

How do you manage feelings of overwhelm right now? Do they work well for you?

Overwhelm is the way stress manifests itself when we are faced with demanding circumstances or an overload of things to do. It often reflects the fast pace of life we lead in the modern world.

Being overwhelmed is a deep emotional response to countless thoughts and experiences. When we feel overwhelmed we can feel **inundated, swamped, overloaded, overpowered, defeated**.

It affects our energy as we feel there is too much to do or think about, this can lead to paralysis, overthinking, negativity or despair. Ultimately it leads to us feeling a lack of control as we believe we aren't able to affect our situation.

In order to master our energy we first need to reduce any feelings of overwhelm and bring back our control.

Here are some exercises to try when you start to experience the feelings you noted above. It will work well to choose one exercise at a time, try it out in a specific situation and write down how it felt for you and what the result of using it was.

Exercise 1: Blue circle of control

Close your eyes and imagine a big blue circle In front of you. Inside the circle place everything on your mind / on your to do list / concerns right now. This can be everything from work, looking after your children, preparing meals, all the way through to current affairs, the news...

Now take a deep breath and focus on each thing in turn and consider if it is something in your control to influence/control/worry about. If it is, keep it in the circle. If it isn't, move it in your mind to outside of the circle, so you can see it but it's on the edge of your vision.

Once you have done this, open your eyes and write down everything you can remember being in the circle, and another list for outside of the circle.

Now consider these lists again. Can you see if anything needs to move? Perhaps it feels like you can worry about the news / current affairs but can you control it? No. You can control the information you consume though, so you could write that down.

Now look at the list of things outside of your control and make a commitment not to spend more than 5 minutes a day thinking / worrying about these.

Make a vow to focus on the things in your control and make them as great as they can be.

Write down three commitments you can make here of what you can do to influence the things in your control (it could be planning your day the night before so you feel more organised, spending only 30 minutes a day reading the news...)

1.
2.
3.

Exercise 2: Change your space

Look around you - is your physical space causing you to feel worse or better right now? It may be that sometimes where we are physically right now isn't helping us to manage our emotions or it may just be that we need a change of space to clear our heads. Can you do any of these?

- Tidy / cheer up / change your physical space.
- Step away from it – take a break and move into a different area.
- Shake off your physical energy – this can be through movement (running, dancing, jumping, shaking...) or through deep breaths.

What did you do?

How did you feel?

Exercise 3: Creating boundaries

Where in your life can you create boundaries that can help to protect your energy? Brainstorm in each area some ways where putting in place a boundary can help you master your energy. This may be boundaries of **time, space, action, words, visual**.

Work:

Home:

Family:

Rest:

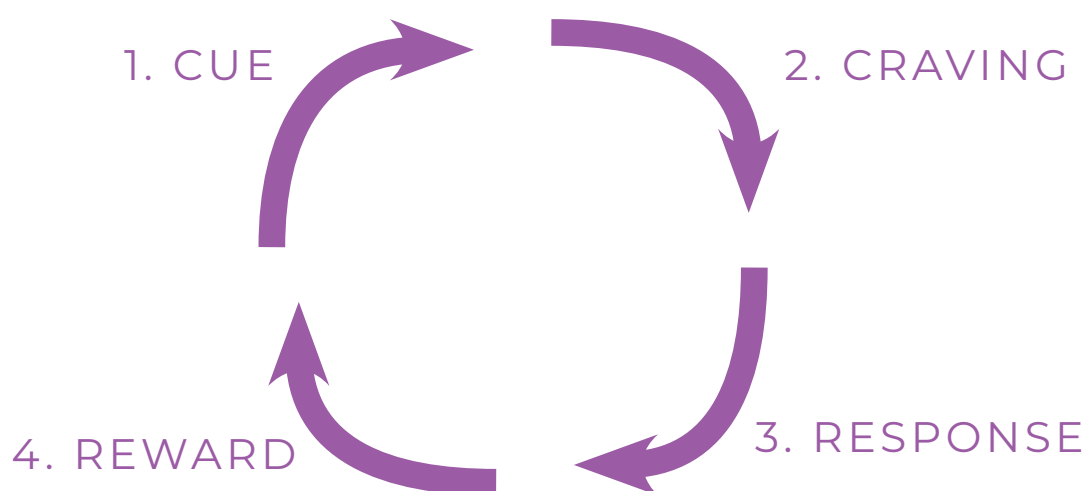
Of these exercises, which do you think you can practice regularly to help you reduce any feelings of overwhelm and focus on positive energy?

Looking at your answer under Daily Energy (page 7), can any of these techniques help with the three things you feel overwhelmed by?

Creating healthy habits to support our energy rhythms

Now we understand how to manage our energy and what works for us best, how do we build this into our routines so that we create strong habits to support us?

Firstly it helps to understand why we create good and bad habits.



Source: James Clear,
Atomic Habits

1. Cue - what is the cue that makes you do that action? (e.g. notification on your phone makes you check social media).

How can you remove that cue?

2. Craving - what craving is that habit satisfying? (e.g. gratification).

How can you replace this craving?

3. Response - what is your response to this craving? (e.g. check Facebook and get lost there for 30 minutes).

What alternative responses are available?

4. Reward - what reward are you seeking? (e.g. 'likes' on social media).

Where else can you get this?

Practice

The biggest take away from this exercise is to remember that this won't change the first time the cue comes up, or the seventh, or the twentieth! Hebb's Rule states:

"CELLS THAT FIRE TOGETHER WIRE TOGETHER."

Our brain cells form neural pathways and these grooves are dictated by our thought patterns. The more we repeat a thought (that translates into action), the more the groove deepens in our brain to become embedded.

So just as a negative habit takes shape and becomes almost an unconscious action, so too can we create positive habits.

The power of consistent repetitive action – it takes anything between eight and 254 days to create a habit – the average is 66. It takes repeated, consistent action to create a new habit.

Look back at your ideal day (page 9) and choose one element that you would like to make an everyday occurrence.

Now think of something you currently do that isn't serving you and that you could replace with this new habit. *(E.g. currently you wake up and spend 30 minutes scrolling on your phone before you get out of bed. Replace this with a 30 minute workout first thing in the morning to raise your energy).*

What has helped you create a healthy habit in the past?

Did you succeed in maintaining it? For how long?

The power of positive thinking

What we think, we create. What we feel, we attract. What we imagine, we become.

There is a popular coaching approach, ABC, pioneered by psychologist Albert Ellis. It stands for:

A: Activating event: something happens to or around someone.

B: Belief: the event causes someone to have a belief, either rational or irrational.

C: Consequence: the belief leads to a consequence, with rational beliefs leading to healthy consequences and irrational beliefs leading to unhealthy consequences.

When we encounter an action (our own or someone else's), we create beliefs around it. These beliefs then influence what we do next, so they become consequences. Here's an example:

Activating event: I have an important presentation approaching.

Belief: 'I'm going to mess it up! I'm so bad at public speaking, I know I'm going to get nervous and forget what I want to say. I'm rubbish at this, my boss is going to think I'm an idiot. My boss might decide to fire me.'

Consequence: Anxious. Can't sleep. Can't focus. Shows up to presentation feeling overly nervous and makes mistakes.

The principle is that it's not the event that has caused our reaction, but our interpretation or perception of the event. So, if we were to change any one or a combination of our environment, thoughts, feelings and physiology, we could change our reaction and our behaviour, demonstrating some choice and an element of control over a situation we may feel is entirely outside of our control.

What would be your belief and consequence of the following event?

Activating event: *You arrange to meet your friend to watch a film. You are waiting outside the cinema. The film is about to start and your friend isn't here yet.*

Belief:

Consequence (emotional and behavioural):

Now come up with an ABC example of your own to identify your unconscious thought pattern (can be hypothetical or real).

Activating event:

Belief:

Consequence (emotional and behavioural):

How we perceive events

When we focus our attention on the good aspects of our day it means our energy remains positive and upbeat. Our tendency to seek out negative rather than positive information is an evolutionary hand-me-down from our cave-dwelling ancestors. Back then, alertness to danger, i.e. “the bad stuff,” was a matter of life and death.

This was designed to protect us and keep us safe from danger. While our environment may have changed, our genetic makeup hasn't and we are still built to scan our environment for danger triggers or negative events to protect ourselves.

Not only do negative events and experiences imprint more quickly, but they also linger longer than positive ones. This stickiness is known as the negativity bias.

So we have to work harder and more intentionally to look for positive events because our brain is more likely to grasp the bad stuff first. If you spent the whole day with a good friend and had a wonderful day, and at one point they made a negative comment, you are more likely to leave with the lasting memory of the negative comment than you are of the whole day.

However the good news is that by training our brains and creating new thought pattern grooves as discussed above, we can start to intentionally notice positive things happening around us instead of seeing the negative first.

Daily activities exercise

Explore the link between an activity you do every day, your mood, and the feelings it creates.

Make a list of your daily activities and put a (P) next to those that are positive and put a (N) next to those that are negative, draining, or make you feel low.

Consider these questions:

- Do you have a choice on what you spend your time on?
- Can you come up with a list of 3 positive activities you can build into your day? Some examples of types of activities are below.
 - o Pleasurable activities - for example, having a hot bath, reading, walking, socials.
 - o Mastery activities (moving you forward) – for example, tidying clutter, organising desk, tidying inbox, paying bills – once you've done it you feel great!
- How can you change your perspective or approach of the more draining, mundane activities to make them more pleasurable?

Being aware of how we spend our day means we can consciously focus on the positive and reduce the negative.

Manifest your perfect energy

In order to create the ideal mindset to support our energy, we can visualise what this can look like. To complete this work I invite you to set an intention.

Visualise what your best, most energised self looks like.

- What's happening around you? What can you see? What can you hear?
- How do you feel when you think about your most energised self? How does your body feel?
- How do you feel when you think about experiencing your perfect day? Perhaps you feel calm, rested, relaxed or energised, upbeat, refreshed, excited.

Notice what emotions come up for you.

Action plan

Choose a mindful activity or strategy you would like to incorporate into your daily routine – it doesn't need to take more than 5-10 minutes a day

Looking at your day, when can you build this activity in?

Choose a habit you currently have that you would like to remove and note it here. What can you replace it with to boost your energy and when can you do it?

Choose a negative part of your day and write down how you can commit to reducing or removing it.

Choose a positive activity or event and commit here how you can incorporate it or increase it.

What intention can you set for your day to be the most energised version of yourself – fully present and calm? Choose a few words or a short sentence that you can repeat often throughout the day to bring you back to this best version of yourself.

Manage your energy and master your rhythm

Additional resources

'The Chimp Paradox' by Prof Steve Peters

'The Happiness Trap' by Russ Harris

'The Power of Now' by Eckhart Tolle

'Atomic Habits' by James Clear

Andy Puddicombe - All it takes is 10 mindful minutes

Dan Gilbert - The surprising science of happiness

Tali Sharot - The optimism bias

everywomanNetwork Resources

Managing your own energy

Being at your best from the outside - peak productivity, energy cycles, energy strengths, de-sludging

The productivity/wellbeing balance: 7 ways to deliver while still looking after yourself

EVERYWOMAN WORKBOOK TEAM

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