



# **ACTION STEPS**

**PASSION QUEST: MODULE 2**

# PRACTICE: WALKING MEDITATION

## Frequency and Duration: *Daily for 5 minutes*

Continue to set aside 5 minutes a day for meditation to create space for answers to emerge and to improve your ability to work with fear and doubt as they arise. It can be helpful to put the time on your calendar and include a reminder or set an alarm to alert you when the time has come.

For this week's practice, instead of doing a sitting meditation, find a space where you can walk. It can be indoors or outdoors, and doesn't have to be a lot of space—you can walk in a circle around a room if that's convenient for you.

Start your meditation in the same way by setting a timer and closing your eyes and taking a few deep breaths. See if you can let go of whatever thoughts are on your mind. When you feel ready, open your eyes and start walking slowly. Take one step with each inhale and one with each exhale. This meditation is very similar to the sitting meditation except that instead of focusing on the sensations of your breath, you're going to focus on the sensations of walking. See if you can notice what you feel in your legs and feet as you move—as your heel strikes the ground, as you transfer your weight, as you lift a leg and place it down again in front of you. Go slowly so you can fully feel all the sensations available to you.

Again, when you notice a thought arise or when you realize that your mind is wandering and you're no longer focused on the sensations of walking, simply label the thoughts by saying "thought" to yourself and bring your attention back to your legs and feet. You will probably have to do this over and over, and it's not a sign that you're doing anything wrong. In fact, there is no way to do meditation wrong as long as you do it with sincerity.

# EXERCISE: OBSERVE YOUR STRENGTHS IN ACTION

One of the best ways to identify our strengths is to observe them in action. This doesn't come easily to most of us because we've been trained to pay attention to what we could improve instead of what we've done well. Noticing our strengths, however, is key to identifying them, and it helps us feel stronger, more confident, and more willing to take risks.

To observe your strengths in action, take 5-10 minutes at the end of each day to sit down in a comfortable place and answer the following questions. Write down your answers so that you can look for patterns later on:

1. What did you do today that you can feel good about?
2. What positive impact did you have on others, your environment, or the world around you, no matter how small?
3. When did you notice flow or ease in what you were doing?

Keep in mind that we usually overlook our greatest gifts because they don't seem grand enough. Be generous with yourself and write down anything that might possibly qualify. If you're having trouble thinking of things, your standards are too high.

After a week, read through the list and make a note of any patterns that you notice. Write these commonly occurring items, themes, or patterns down, as we'll come back to them later.

# OPTIONAL BONUS EXERCISE: SEEING YOUR GIFTS FROM A DIFFERENT PERSPECTIVE

Think of three friends, family members, or colleagues, people you like and trust and who know you well, ideally in different capacities. They don't need to know everything about you, but they need to have significant experience with you. It can be helpful to invite people who know you in different contexts. Ask each person to spend 10-15 minutes helping you with a brief exercise.

First, ask the person to spend 3 minutes talking about what they like or appreciate about you; what's good about you; and what makes you unique in their eyes. Your role during this time is to listen and be silent.

Ask them to be as specific as possible. Explain that saying, "You're a great person" is wonderful, but not so helpful for your present purposes. Things like, "You make me feel better when I'm sad," or "You can put any idea into action," or, "You're really good at knowing exactly which pillow will make a room look great" are much more helpful. Remind them as well that this is not a time to point out areas for improvement. That's not the purpose of this exercise. So invite them to only speak about the positive and leave any criticism or suggestions, no matter how constructive, for another day.

Record or write down what they say word-for-word as closely as you can. You want to be able to come back to this information later and remember it as accurately as possible.

For some of us it may be difficult to listen to praise for 3 minutes without responding. Resist the urge to say thank you. Resist the urge to object to what they're saying, either out loud or in your head. See if you can give yourself permission to believe that what they're saying is true. Accept the praise and let it soak in. See if you can even let yourself enjoy it, even if it's uncomfortable.

When your friend or loved one is finished, switch roles and do the same for them. Go through this process with at least 3 people.

At the end of the interviews, make a list of the strengths, abilities, and gifts that were recognized in you. Circle the ones that you feel best about and like to use the most.

# ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

**StrengthsFinder.com** ([www.gallupstrengthscenter.com](http://www.gallupstrengthscenter.com)) [assessment]

This online assessment identifies your top strengths and explains what they mean and how you might put them to use at work.

**List of traits** (<http://ideonomy.mit.edu/essays/traits.html>)

If you need ideas for how to describe your strengths, look here for a solid list of ideas.