

# MINDSET MAKEOVER

*workbook*

Join us on this three part mindset makeover series to jump start or reinvigorate your wellness journey. Together we will lay the best foundation possible for true healing.

VITAE FUNCTIONAL MEDICINE





*section 1*  
**WHY MINDSET?**



At Vitae, we believe the emerging science that is saying our mental and emotional health are inextricably linked to our physical health. Our thoughts can literally affect our illnesses, recovery times, our pain levels, our immune responses, and can even trigger chemical changes in our DNA!

A study from Harvard found that individuals with an optimistic outlook had a significantly lower risk of developing disease and chronic conditions when compared to their non-optimistic counterparts!

[www.health.harvard.edu/healthbeat/giving-thanks-can-make-you-happier](http://www.health.harvard.edu/healthbeat/giving-thanks-can-make-you-happier)



Your mindset is the foundation on which the rest of your health is built. Change your thoughts and begin your healing.

# *poopy diaper syndrome* FROM DR GREG

The theory originated when Doc was in the high-stakes days of potty training with his fourth baby. This sweet child knew everything she needed to do, she could eloquently describe the intricacies of where everything should go (the toilet!), she could even walk you through the process. But she wouldn't ditch doing the duty in the diaper...and with a smile on her face because she knew exactly what she was doing! In a moment of parental enlightenment, Doc realized it's not that she liked the feeling of poopy pants, she was just a mastermind of priorities. She knew that she loved the feeling of being scooped up by her daddy and having his undivided attention. So her actions didn't change. Her actions were serving her. She was conditioned to this undesirable behavior because it was meeting a deeper need that she had.

Here's the hard truth from Dr Greg, but go here with us if you can: So many of the things we do, the responses we give, the bad habits we have, originate because they have served us in some way! That junk food makes us feel better and helps us escape (at least for a few minutes). That addiction to stress has filled our deep need for accomplishment. The jaded view we have of the world is protecting us from getting hurt again. The debilitating autoimmune condition actually brings the attention we've been craving for so long.

We know this is heavy, but true change will not come unless we start to find out where our conditioning came from. How are the things that we're doing, the attitudes that we are keeping, and even our illnesses serving us in some way. Of course we're not saying that autoimmune conditions always have a root cause of emotion but there are definitely times where it does and we need to be brave enough to dig a little deeper and do the work if we truly want to heal.

Now lets do the healing work...

# Action step

## IDENTIFY STUCK AREAS

Carve out 30 minutes to take an inventory of all of the areas of your life. When you look at each area, what comes up as something that doesn't sit well with you? Examples: Overexercising, penny-pinching, frustrated a lot of the day, talking down to yourself, needing others to affirm you, etc.

Our one requirement is there is no shame, guilt, or judgment allowed for what comes up for you. Just observe and jot it down.

WE'VE INCLUDED A FEW QUESTIONS IN EACH AREA TO GET YOU STARTED BUT DIG DEEP FOR WHAT THE STUCK AREAS MIGHT BE IN EACH CATEGORY

### HEALTH

How is your relationship with food? What is your response to working out?

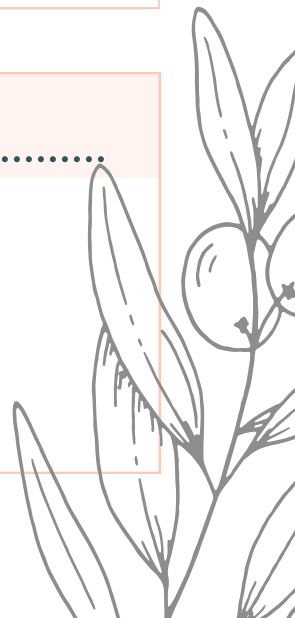
Are there any triggers for you in taking care of your body or eating well? .....

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### FINANCES

What are your spending decisions based on? Is there any fear around money for you? How was money handled in your home growing up? .....

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## RELATIONSHIPS

Is it easy for you to communicate? Are you easily frustrated?  
How does it feel to be loved by someone?  
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## SELF TALK

How do you speak to yourself? Is it filled with love and grace or do  
you speak down to yourself? What types of things do you say?  
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## WORK

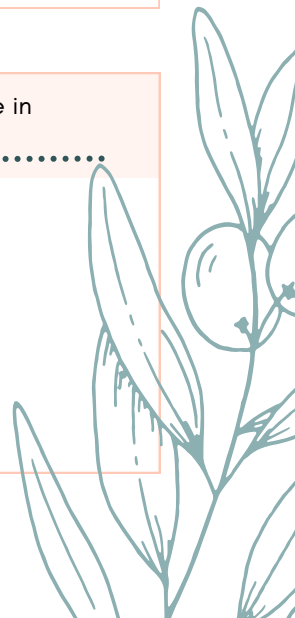
What is your relationship like with work? Is it something you dread or something you  
find value in? Do you find yourself over working to find value?  
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## FAITH

What is your response to spirituality and faith? Was it something that was positive in  
your childhood or was there judgement? What do you think about God?  
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OTHER: .....

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OTHER: .....

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Now that you have identified some stuck areas, print out a few of the next journal pages and begin doing the work to shift those stuck areas.

Get curious to where you learned your reactions or how that habit you want so badly to break is actually serving a deep need. Ask yourself “Where did I learn this reaction? How was I conditioned to this response? And how am I going to give myself grace and allow that need to be met in a healthier way?”

Awareness is the first step to lasting change. The awareness might bring about more hard questions: “Will my spouse still pay attention to me if I’m not chronically ill? How will I comfort myself if I don’t turn to food anymore? How will I feel good about myself if I’m not accomplishing tasks at full throttle? What will be asked of me if I’m not sick anymore?” Dr. Greg’s advice: “Lean into the questions. When you give yourself time to be still, the answers will be revealed to you”.

If we want to heal our bodies, we have to start with our minds. Let’s be brave enough to ask the questions, lean into the things that come up, and shift the habits that aren’t serving us any longer.



# journal

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A series of horizontal dotted lines for writing, consisting of 18 lines spaced evenly down the page.

# Section 2

# STRESS

“Research shows that almost every system in the body can be influenced by chronic stress. When chronic stress goes unreleased, it suppresses the body’s immune system and ultimately manifests as illness.” Stress is a major contributing factor for at least 8 of the top 10 leading causes of death in the United States!

Our bodies only have the chance to heal when we slow down long enough to tap into parasympathetic mode. This is called “rest and digest” mode. It is the opposite of sympathetic mode, more often called “fight or flight” mode (ie chronic stress). Being in fight or flight mode inhibits our bodies from being able to repair themselves. If we are stressed, we are not healing. We are allowing the troublemakers in our bodies to have free reign. It is only in “rest and digest” mode that we can stay on top of



## IN THE LAST MONTH, HOW OFTEN HAVE YOU:

### STRESS ASSESSMENT

	Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Always
felt confident handling a problem	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
felt things were going your way	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
found that you could cope easily	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
been able to control irritations	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
felt that you were on top of things	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
stepped away when things got stressful	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
felt light hearted and at rest	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
allotted time for your hobbies & interests	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
had a positive outlook and energy	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
let go of the things out of your control	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

# Action step

## REST & DIGEST MODE

Even 5 minutes, a few times a day, can put you in that parasympathetic mode and allow your body to reset and heal. We're going to give you two of our favorite techniques to try! The best part? They're absolutely free and can be done anywhere! They are so simple you might want to dismiss them right away but if you believe that the body has the potential to heal when we remove the interference (of which one of the biggest is stress!) then you will harness the amazing potential of these two simple action steps.

### BOX BREATHING

This is such a simple practice that packs a powerful punch to 'fight or flight' mode. "Deep breathing and relaxation activate the other part of your nervous system, the parasympathetic nervous system, which sends a signal to your brain to tell the anxious part that you're safe and don't need to use the fight, flight, or freeze response." It's as easy as finding two minutes to do a 4x4x4x4 breathing pattern: breathe in for the count of 4, hold it for a count of 4, breathe out for a count of 4, hold it out for a count of 4. Repeat 10-20 times. Try this in a stressful moment or just do it routinely during the day.

### PRAYER/MINDFULNESS

In 2020, the Wall Street Journal printed an article entitled "The Science of Prayer" which states that, "It can calm your nervous system, shutting down your fight or flight response. It can make you less reactive to negative emotions and less angry." This powerful tool can reduce inflammation, improve immune function, reduce stress, lower blood pressure, and even reduce chronic pain. Develop a practice for yourself when you are in a stressful situation: Stop, breathe, and pray or be still for as many minutes as you are able. Even 2 minutes can be beneficial. As you incorporate this habit, your body can enter a truly restful and healing state.

Grab the journal prompts on the next page to begin adjusting your stress response



*de-stress*

## ACTION STEPS

Now lets do the healing work...



1

How have I responded to stress in the past?

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2

What is one thing I could shift in my response to stressful situations?

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3

When and how will I take that step next time I'm triggered by stress?

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# section 3

# GRATITUDE

Illness & autoimmune diseases thrive in stressful environments. And like the breath work and mindfulness tools we shared, gratitude acts as a powerful practice to help get you into that parasympathetic mode! When you embrace gratitude, your body releases feel-good hormones (dopamine and oxytocin) which of course improves our mental health but it goes beyond that as well! These biochemical shifts can strengthen your immune response, lower cortisol levels and reduce inflammation, which directly affect autoimmune & other chronic conditions.

Gratitude can literally change your neurobiochemistry. Neuro pathways are built and strengthened by practicing gratitude. Harvard Health Publishing wrote an article entitled "[Giving Thanks Can Make You Happier](#)" and it outlines a study that was conducted where three groups of people were asked to write a few sentences each week. The first was asked to write about things they were grateful for from their week. The second, to write about their frustrations and irritations of the week and the last wrote about anything from their week, either positive or negative. Here are the incredible results, "After 10 weeks, those who wrote about gratitude were more optimistic and felt better about their lives. Surprisingly, they also exercised more and had fewer visits to physicians than those who focused on sources of aggravation."

Eye-opening, right?! It can be summed up "the happy get happier, the sad get sadder".



Let's learn how to choose gratitude...

# GRATITUDE

We acknowledge that gratitude is not the first thing that comes to mind when you're suffering. You may need to dig deep if you are in the midst of emotional or physical hardship but here's what we can hold onto

- 1 Gratitude is a magnifier. The more we focus on what we're grateful for, the more we can find.
- 2 Gratitude and negativity can't coexist. But you have to choose which one you want and continue to choose it.
- 3 Gratitude is one of the only things we have control over. Our situations might be overwhelming, but we can control our outlook on life and choose the good.
- 4 Gratitude flips the script. Instead of focusing on what's hard, we can focus on what we're learning in the hardship.

# *our favorite* GRATITUDE PRACTICE

1

At night, choose three things from your day that you are grateful for. Dig deep to find what is good even in the hard situations! It could be as small as "I woke up today". Find a deep appreciation for where you are at right now!

2

Choose a way to hold these three things close to you the next day: A journal, a sticky notes on your mirror, a whiteboard at your desk, a note on your phone... anything to keep the good in front of you.

3

Keep coming back to it the following day. When you are stressed, read your gratitudes. When you are tempted to spiral into negativity, let the good things pull you back up.

4

Repeat. Repeat. Repeat. What could change in your life if gratitude was the focus instead of the hardship? A great perk of this method is if we know we need to write down three things at night, we will be looking for it throughout our day, developing those neuropathways! Win-win-win!

To get started, print several copies of the next page to keep your gratitudes in front of you



Today I am  
GRATEFUL FOR

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# *affirming* THE GOOD

As a little extra bonus, we wanted to throw in one more mindset practice: affirmations. Even if you don't feel well yet, you can still affirm and cultivate the good that is possible in your life.



Affirm the positive things in your life

- "I trust that my body can heal and thrive."
- "Every day I am getting healthier and stronger."
- "I can choose peace and joy as my focus"
- "I am worth the time and energy it takes to get well"
- "I appreciate everything my body does every day."

# notes

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# About VITAE FM

Vitae Functional Medicine exists to find the root cause of your illness and help you return to living.

We provide personal, functional, integrative care. With clinician-led wellness journeys for chronic illness & infection, hormone balance, and recovery.



Do you want to find the root cause for your symptoms?

REACH OUT!

[support@vitaefm.com](mailto:support@vitaefm.com)

[www.vitaefm.com](http://www.vitaefm.com)

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