

**Effective Strategies to help you Cope if things have got tough, and also to help you re-engage Joyfully with life and make Practical Plans for further goals.** This is especially slanted to suit mums, but is helpful for anybody to use.

For starters, how about keeping a special book to write down lists, notes, responses and observations as you go along. This is a special record of things you will want to know where to find and refer back to easily from time to time.

If you are setting out on this journey with young children, then use a large scrapbook for them as well. Encourage them to explore the world around them and draw and stick things into their scrapbook as they go.

**Make the best of what you have.** List all the good things about and around you, and focus on appreciating them by referring to your list every day. This should include :

- Things about yourself (assets, skills, attributes – for example, you might have child care skills, be a good cook, a loyal partner, have beautiful hair, strong arms, be friendly, have a great sense of humour, good health, good home, job that fits around family so that you can be there for them, considerate, helpful, creative)
- Things about your friends and family etc – listing each person separately is probably best (very similar to above, including things like: loving partner you can communicate well with, great children, sensible teenager, friends you can chat at ease with, parent you can ask for help, practical brother, understanding boss, etc.)
- Things about your surroundings ( beautiful hills and valleys you can walk in, rivers to fish or swim in, amazing flowers or butterflies you can look at or smell or draw or photograph, places to go out and listen to music and dance, gym, martial arts or yoga etc classes, seaside for watersports, swimming pool, good school, other kids that your kids can spend time with, good weather for growing your crops or veg etc, access to good health support, libraries, college, jobs, etc.)

You can also refer back to this list to make sure you **remember to make use of the good stuff** – for example, keep a diary perhaps to just take note of inspiring things at any time, and to draw in or write poems in about the beautiful things in any wild spaces you visit. You might like to cook a special meal for your partner or family or even just for yourself, find ways to ensure that you keep up with your friends (even if just via the internet if they are far away), find fun ways to keep fit, set aside time for good movies or comedy shows or music events, access resources and knowledge available, play games with your friends and family, etc. Remember to give praise to partners and children when you can.

When taking walks or going on trips with your children it is great to point out how things work along the way, and show them the beautiful details in nature, encourage them to draw or write about it, or stick things in their scrapbooks, such as leaflets about where you have been. You could help them draw a flower or leaf, and then press it between the pages of a heavy book in greaseproof paper (which keeps it more vibrant than tissue

paper). Then later on when it has dried you can compare it to the drawing, maybe even stick it into the scrapbook next to the drawing.

**"Beauty is alive in every moment, riding the breath of life to remind you of the flower that is your heart." Global Love Project**

**"To pay attention, this is our endless and proper work." Mary Oliver**

**Basically, if you practice paying attention to all the beauty and detail of life, you are bearing witness to what is possible, and showing appreciation of the diversity, thereby also increasing your own sense of joy in being alive, and your capacity for learning and creativity.**

Young children can understand a lot more than we tend to think, and it is crucial to keep their curiosity, sense of wonder, and thirst for knowledge alive. You too can enjoy their delight if you help them for example by using illustrated information books. It is wonderful if you can put on a little act and exclaim with delight or awe at some of the amazing details.



**Effective communication is vital**, whether it be at work, or with family, children, or friends. Be prepared to ensure that you have your fair say in a respectful way. Again, it is good to write things down in preparation so that you are clear about what the most important one or two things you want to discuss are, and don't muddy the waters with all sorts of vague bits and pieces. I do have more detailed downloads about communication available on [Greatvine.com](http://Greatvine.com)

**Let go of small things that niggle** at you by concentrating on being grateful for the good things. What does the other stuff matter by comparison? We all know that no one is

perfect, so let's stop expecting them to be. If you give praise for the good stuff it will make everybody (including yourself) feel more willing to try to be their best.

**List the knowledge and skills that you already have**, and appreciate those too. These are the building blocks of your life. No thing is too small, so put them all down

**If you are lacking in confidence then use affirmations** to help build this up. There is a page of these on my website, as well as being available as a download on Greatvine.com You can also learn to write your own – they must always be written in the present tense.

A wonderful affirmation that helps balance your mind, body, and spirit because it aligns you with the earth and the universe (both of which crucially allow and support life) is to simply say **“I love, and I am loved”**. You need to be comfortable, take a few deep breaths to relax and focus, and then say this aloud and feel that it is true. Your relationship with the universe and with the earth is fundamental to who you are. Be at ease with yourself, and let the energy flow up and down your spine as you stand upon the earth, holding your head steady, repeating this until you know that it is true.

When we are balanced, it is easy for others to love us, because we hold a steadiness in our hearts and do not react to trivial things. You are regaining your connection with the deep self and the real world beneath all the crazy stuff and meaningless rules we have piled on it. Breathe deeply and feel yourself to be more free.



As you progress through all these ideas here and in some of my other materials, **you will find that your confidence increases quite naturally**. You have to know that you are worth it. Everyone has an equal right to live their lives as they choose because each one of us is a vital part of the overall diversity of life and consciousness. You are a unique human being come to experience life on this planet so you should aim to learn from everything, even what we would normally term as negative because the most challenging things usually have the most potential to teach us stuff. Even illness can be viewed as the body trying to show us that it needs attention, so once you start listening to that and doing something about it, you are taking the positive steps you need to. It is your life, and you have the power to choose to make it good for you. You should not be afraid to follow

your heart and fulfil your dreams, don't listen to people who tell you otherwise, or to any niggling doubts in your ego-mind.

**Our minds can be used as tools to help us help ourselves**, instead of allowing ourselves to be subjected to some of the silly thoughts, fears, and worries that tend to go round in our heads if we let them. Stop listening to that sort of negative stuff and focus on the positive. Think about it – worry is a total waste of energy because it does not achieve anything productive. All it does is show us that perhaps we need to take care to prepare for whatever it is we are worrying about or fearing, so that we can face it instead of letting it knock us down. Fear stands for False Evidence Appearing Real – usually if we just get on and do what we are afraid of, then we find it is all fine after all – so we need to learn to stop our minds getting in the way, and use them instead to help us move forwards. I will be writing lots more articles on how to use our minds as tools.

By making these lists of all the good stuff, we can then remind ourselves of things to inspire and motivate us. We can say “AHHHH YES I CAN DO THIS. Look I already have some of the skills, and I can learn the rest, and find out what I need to know and do to be successful.” You can learn to follow your heart to be who you truly want to be.

**If you feel stressed or depressed**, then look for my articles that can help with such issues, which are again available on my website or as downloads on Greatvine.com There is a full Stress Busting guide available on Greatvine too. Don't let these things steal your power, learn how to deal with them! I also have a separate little download of simple visualizations to help relax you, but meditation is even more powerful, so if you are prepared to put in the work, go for my full meditation guide download, and you should be well rewarded for your efforts. Meditation takes you into a sense of bliss that arises from a combination of personal and universal power.

**Promise yourself that you are going to stop beating yourself up about anything** – you are doing the best you can for the moment, and as you find out how best to move forward, you will continue to be doing the best that you can in each moment. Of course, as you learn and plan and achieve, that best will be better than it was before, and you can congratulate yourself for every step that you take. Meantime just do not expect too much from yourself, we can only do what we can, given the tools we have in each moment. Don't judge yourself (or others) – each moment is only one step on our journey. Even if you take a step backwards, don't waste time and energy on berating yourself for that, just get back on the track.

**Everyone needs a bit of space to themselves** once in a while, so ensure that you do get this, and don't let anyone else make you feel that you can't take it – we need to rest and renew ourselves, recharge our energy. We all have different ways of doing this, so plan for it as part of your life, just don't overdo it – there is a big difference between taking time out now and again to do something inspiring, and withdrawing or retreating from things. It should be time to do something positive for yourself..... yes if you need to

sleep, then sleep, but ideally you could meditate or read or write or draw or play music, go for a walk, visit a friend, or do anything you love. Meditation is fantastic for regaining and strengthening our deeper sense of self. It can also be used as a tool to train our minds to do what we want instead of getting in our way.

**Plan lists of anything else you want to learn or achieve** – we can come back to this later, it is just to get your thoughts clear for now. Don't just think about work, think about hobbies, enjoyment etc too, anything that might help you (and your partners, and children, if you have them) have more fun. Obviously sometimes you may need to do things on your own, but this can be planned for – if you really want to do it, make sure you put it on your list, don't leave anything off or limit yourself just because your logical mind says it isn't practical!

**Writing all these things down helps to give them more potential.** If you faithfully make your lists as suggested, then you will find it useful to refer back to them to remind yourself of your thoughts and renew your positive motivation. Another main factor about writing all these things down is that it clarifies your intentions, which helps you focus on what you want. If our minds are less muddled then we are simply much more likely to follow what we have set down, so this focus removes the muddle and sets you on track.

**We can go a stage further and use life coaching charts to actually make step by step plans of how we are going to get from point A to B.** These are different from the lists above, because these exercises here are looking at your whole life really, whereas in life coaching plans you need to focus on one or two specific areas – for example how to get to do what you want at college, how to plan to move country, how to give up a bad habit, how to save or pay off debts, how to get fit or lose weight, how to basically achieve any goal we choose to.

We make the steps along the way realistic and achievable alongside time frames that again are realistic and achievable. We also add in details like who is going to help or support you where help is needed, for example you may need a childminder so that you can attend college, or you might just need to be able to phone someone up for moral support if you are feeling tired and demoralised. Or you might just be able to refer back to your book where you have written your list of reasons for doing this in the first place to regain your sense of motivation. In any case, your plan will also include rewards for achievement along the way to help keep up your motivation. We need to bear in mind that any cycle of change is bound to have slight setbacks once in a while as it is normal to feel very motivated to start with then run out of steam a bit if things get tough, but the thing is just to get back on up and on with it again as soon as you are ready, and not waste time and energy regretting the setback. If we are prepared well enough, then we will have the support in place to help us get back on track. I have life coaching charts available on [Greatvine.com](http://Greatvine.com) for download so that you can use them, or you can email me for copies.

If we want to find something to do and we are not sure what that is yet, then I also have a system included in my Life Coaching packages to help you tap your subconscious to **identify what you most want**. This might help mums returning to work, or mothers whose children have left home, for example, to decide what sort of a career or business they might want to go for, or define what hobbies or college course might suit someone. Again, look for this on Greatvine.com or email me for copies.

I also love to help Young People and have specific materials available about communication with them, and helping them to make the transition into adulthood.

I have other downloadable guides such as ‘Confirming your Joy’, ‘Sacred Perspectives’, ‘Evolving Consciousness’ ones, and Creative ones, which will be available on Greatvine.com soon after this article becomes available there.

**Creativity is not just about the generally recognised arts, it includes all sorts of things**, like cooking, sewing, woodwork, gardening, flower arranging, decorating, you name it, we all have some creativity in us.

**Creativity helps you express yourself, and your appreciation of life.** Both of those help add to your sense of confidence and satisfaction because you are interacting more with the world around you through your creativity, which also involves a deep level of noticing details. So I always advocate that people watch other people, animals, plants, anything at all, and really note the finer details of behaviour, natural beauty, and the amazing diversity of life, the interaction between things, and also how things function so incredibly well – including our own bodies. It is equally inspiring to know that even if we may not function that well *all* the time, we can always do something about helping ourselves return to our optimum state.

## HELPFUL TOOLS

**I have the following Life Coaching Tools** available as downloads on Greatvine.com

There are some specific pointers in there that will be helpful to **Mums returning to work**, plus an example form called “**Improving Belief in Self as Parent and as having Valuable Skills & a Right to a Career of Own Choosing**”.

Life Coaching - Pack of All 3 Achievable Goal Planning Sections - How to Maximise Success, Help to Decide, and all FORMS - £6.50 (which gives a saving of 50p on buying them separately as detailed below).

[The sections are also available separately so that people who don’t need the “help to decide” section can save by just buying the other two. And sometimes people just want the “help to decide” section and then take it from there themselves because they might already know about life coaching, but that is a unique extra developed by me. Or people

might just want to use my forms and look at my examples, although I do obviously recommend looking at the 2<sup>nd</sup> section too, as there is so much useful information in it.]

Life Coaching 1 - How to HELP yourself DECIDE WHAT you really want to do - £1.50  
*Help with deciding on your goals in the first place. It's best to get really clear before you begin the planning stage so that you don't waste time and effort.*

*For example, you could be trying to decide which course to study, what to do as a career (or change of career), or for a hobby etc, but you can also apply it to any decision you are not sure about (like moving home, ending a relationships, travelling etc).*

*We do sometimes subconsciously block our own progress, particularly if we are not sure what we want, or if we don't have enough self esteem or confidence in ourselves.*

Life Coaching 2 - HOW TO develop achievable Goal Plans, and put realistic Timescales, Support, and Rewards in place TO MAXIMISE SUCCESS - £2.50

*Includes details of what to think about before starting your plan.*

*Includes details of how to prepare plans successfully by avoiding certain pitfalls.*

*Includes details of how to keep motivated and communicate your needs to rally support.*

Life Coaching 3 - Goal Setting FORMS - £3

*Includes blank form for your use, plus a tutor form with guidelines on, plus several examples.*

Examples include: 1) **paying off debts**, 2) **losing weight and getting fit** alongside study times, job, and committee member obligations, 3) planning workshops with all the admin etc included, and 4) **Improving Belief in Self as Parent and as having Valuable Skills & a Right to a Career of Own Choosing.**

<http://www.greatvine.com/julia-woodman>

## IN CONCLUSION

I really hope that this has been helpful, and that anyone interested in planning to achieve goals will take the next step and download the life coaching packs, but please do also feel free to phone or email me with any questions.

If you decide from the outset that you would like me to work with you as a life coach, then email me first (using the Greatvine system) and I will send the packs by return instead of you having to download them. Include your own email address though as I am not sure I can send them via the system otherwise.

**Julia Woodman – Life Coach, Counsellor, Stress Consultant, and Writer**



Advice Line **0905 620 1396**

£1.02/min - from a BT landline. Calls from other networks and mobiles may vary. 18+

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