



# **Resilience Guidebook**

**A Courage to Caregivers Guide to  
Telling Your Story**





Welcome – we’re glad you’ve found Courage to Caregivers!

It takes a tremendous amount of courage just to take that first step—acknowledging that this journey of being a caregiver to someone you love can be hard, and recognizing you don’t want to take this journey alone. At Courage to Caregivers, we are ALL caregivers, and we’re glad to partner with you on this journey.

Courage to Caregivers offers three programs - all virtual due to the pandemic: One-to-One Caregiver Peer Support, Support Groups and Breathing Meditation classes. Our programs are based on a curriculum that is organized into 12 monthly themes with weekly topics within each theme—all focused on building resilience as a caregiver.





This compact journal provides affirmations, inspirational quotes, breathing techniques, and journal prompts that can be used as a companion to our programming or it can be used as a stand-alone tool. Additional resources can be found on our website. You can access our website via the QR code.



I welcome you to reach out to connect with me at any time—via email or text or call. Know that you are never alone!

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## **Why set goals?**

Goal setting is a way to gently challenge yourself to make small or big changes in your life. These goals can be to change a behavior you find problematic, to grow personally, or simply to make your caregiving less stressful. The goals should also be specific or detailed to help you be more likely to achieve them. Simply put: goals should be **SMART**:

- Specific
- Measurable
- Achievable
- Relevant
- Timely

On the last week of each month we will summarize the month's topic and explore more ideas...and most importantly don't forget to celebrate your success!





## **Contents of your Resilience Guidebook**

### **THEME 1 – DREAM BIG**

Week 1 – Personal Timeline

Week 2 – Personal Mission Statement

Week 3 – What Brings You Joy?

Week 4 – Recap Week – Goal Reviews

### **THEME 2 – SELF-DISCOVERY**

Week 1 – Strengths Become Opportunities

Week 2 – Self-Confidence

Week 3 – Self- Love

Week 4 – Recap Week – Goal Reviews

### **THEME 3 – MINDFULNESS**

Week 1 – Self-Regulation

Week 2 – Self-Compassion

Week 3 – Emotional Self-Control

Week 4 – Inner Calm

Week 5 – Recap Week – Goal Reviews





#### **THEME 4 – MY PLACE IN THE WORLD**

Week 1 – Letting Go/Surrender

Week 2 – Understanding Stress

Week 3 – Bridging Differences

Week 4 – Recap Week – Goal Reviews

#### **THEME 5 – GROWTH MINDSET**

Week 1 – Thinking in Extremes

Week 2 – Happiness and Laughter

Week 3 – Staying Curious

Week 4 – Recap Week – Goal Reviews

#### **THEME 6 – CREATIVE EMPOWERMENT**

Week 1 – Open-Mindedness

Week 2 – Holding Space and Silence

Week 3 – Creative Space and Activities

Week 4 – Healthy Boundaries

Week 5 – Recap Week – Goal Reviews





**THEME 7 – YOU HAVE THE POWER TO GROW**

Week 1 – Self-Discipline and Motivation

Week 2 – Media Consumption

Week 3 – Play

Week 4 – Recap Week – Goal Reviews

**THEME 8 – YOUR BODY IS A TEMPLE**

Week 1 – Nourish Yourself

Week 2 – Body Image

Week 3 – Move Your Body

Week 4 – Sleep Hygiene

Week 5 – Recap Week – Goal Reviews

**THEME 9 – ATTITUDE**

Week 1 – Persistence

Week 2 – Realistic Optimism

Week 3 – Coping Mechanisms

Week 4 – Recap Week – Goal Reviews





## **THEME 10 – COURAGE**

Week 1 – Learn From Mistakes

Week 2 – Strength Amidst Adversity

Week 3 – Progress Over Perfection

Week 4 – Recap Week – Goal Reviews

## **THEME 11 – COLLABORATION**

Week 1 – Support Network

Week 2 – Managing Perceptions

Week 3 – Forgiveness and Gratitude

Week 4 – Compare and Despair

Week 5 – Recap Week – Goal Reviews

## **THEME 12 – OUTLOOK**

Week 1 – Hope

Week 2 – Opportunity and Possibility

Week 3 – Celebrate Success

Week 4 – Recap Week – Goal Reviews







## **Why is breath work important?**

Simple breathing practices are an effective, available, and free way to manage our stresses. Whenever you decide to practice, be intentional about it. Take the time to come to a comfortable position. And allow yourself a few minutes to relax and tune in to the breath.

Under stress, most of us breathe shallow, rapid, and through the mouth. This type of breathing contributes to all kinds of health issues from increased anxiety to high blood pressure. Learning to regulate the breath is a path to self-regulation.





Principles of healthy breathing for the practices listed below:

- Nasal breathing (breathing in and out through the nose) except where noted otherwise.
  - ♦ Nasal breathing filters and warms the air
  - ♦ Can impact hormone levels in the body
  - ♦ Can lower blood pressure
  - ♦ Influences heart rate
- “Slow and Low” - slow, effortless breaths, into the lower lobes of the lungs.
- Belly subtly expands with the inhale, Belly subtly draws in with the exhale.
- Regulating the breath can help us to regulate the body / mind system. For example: lengthening the exhale activates the body’s relaxation response.





## **Breathing Practices Glossary**

### **Alternate Nostril Breathing:**

**Option 1:** Take a cleansing breath. Close the left nostril and just breathe in and out through the right for 5-10 rounds. Notice. Close the right nostril and just breathe in and out through the left for 5-10 rounds. Notice.

**Option 2:** Take a cleansing breath. Close the right nostril, breathe in through the left; close the left nostril, breathe out through the right - breathe in right, close the right and breathe out left. That's one round. Continue for 5-10 more rounds. Notice and be curious about the impact this practice has on you body, mind, and emotions.

### **Bellows Breath:**

**Option 1:** Take a full in-breath, followed by an active out-breath (drawing navel toward spine) repeat.

**Option 2:** "Reach for the Sun"/Bellows





## **What are affirmations? Why do we use them?**

Affirmations are positive, present tense statements that plant seeds in our awareness. We all have negative self-talk that happens in our mind. An affirmation is a way of interrupting the negative self, and planting the seed for another perspective. Repeated over and over in mantra-like fashion so that thoughts may take hold and begin to shift our inner state...from fear to trust, from resentment to acceptance, from weakness or victim to strength and courage! Enjoy our suggested affirmations, but feel free to receive them as inspiration to formulate your own.





# DREAM BIG

## PERSONAL TIMELINE

### GOALS FOR THIS WEEK:

In what small way can I grow for the future?

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### AFFIRMATION:

When I look back I realize how successful I have been in figuring out my most challenging times.

### BREATHING TECHNIQUE:

Breath Awareness:  
Invite curiosity and observe the subtleties of the breath for 2-5 minutes.

### MICRO SELF-CARE:

Eat something nourishing.

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“  
What you think,  
you become. What  
you feel, you attract.  
What you imagine,  
you create.  
- Buddha  
”







# DREAM BIG

PERSONAL MISSION  
STATEMENT  
WHO ARE YOU?

## GOALS FOR THIS WEEK:

How do I see myself  
being excited to write  
my story/future?

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## AFFIRMATION:

My values are like a  
compass, guiding my  
path. Aligned with my  
values, my life has a  
quality of ease and flow.

## BREATHING TECHNIQUE:

Belly Breathing: Observe the  
breath for 2-5 minutes and  
begin to invite the breath to  
slow down. Breathe in as the  
belly moves out/expands,  
and breathe out as the belly  
draws- in/contracts.

## MICRO SELF-CARE:

Intentionally enjoy a  
natural aroma, like a fresh  
cut fruit or burn a natural  
candle for no other reason  
than it smells nice.

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“  
The one thing that you  
have that nobody else has  
is you. Your voice, your  
story, your vision. So  
write and draw and build  
and play and dance  
and live as only you can.  
- Neil Gaiman  
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# DREAM BIG

WHAT BRINGS YOU JOY?

## GOALS FOR THIS WEEK:

How can I incorporate more micro-joys into my life?

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## AFFIRMATION:

In the garden  
that is my life  
I cultivate JOY.

## BREATHING TECHNIQUE:

3-5 rounds of  
Breath of Joy.  
Repeat as needed.

## MICRO SELF-CARE:

Make a proper  
pot of tea or coffee  
and take your time  
while making it.

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“  
Joy is a decision,  
a really brave  
one, about how  
you are going to  
respond to life.  
- Wess Stafford  
”







# DREAM BIG

## RECAP WEEK

### GOALS FOR THIS WEEK:

How can I continue what I learned this month into February?

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### AFFIRMATION:

When I reflect on my life I see that I am resilient, strong, and creative.

### BREATHING TECHNIQUE:

Breath Awareness, Belly Breathing, Breath of Joy. Set a timer for 3 minutes and take a little bit of time with each of this month's breathing practices

### MICRO SELF-CARE:

Put on your favorite song from a few years ago and have a mini dance party!

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“ Loving ourselves through the process of owning our story is the bravest thing we will ever do. - Brené Brown ”







## SELF DISCOVERY

STRENGTHS BECOME OPPORTUNITIES

### GOALS FOR THIS WEEK:

How can I better apply my strengths to my life right now?

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“  
The struggle you're in today is developing the strength you need for tomorrow.  
- Robert Tew  
”

### AFFIRMATION:

I discover my unique strengths and they reveal my resilience.

### BREATHING TECHNIQUE:

Ocean Breath: Picture yourself by the ocean and imagine breathing with the waves on a calm clear day, matching your in-breath with the waves rolling in and out-breath with the waves moving back out to sea.

### MICRO SELF-CARE:

Put lotion or essential oils on your hands.

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