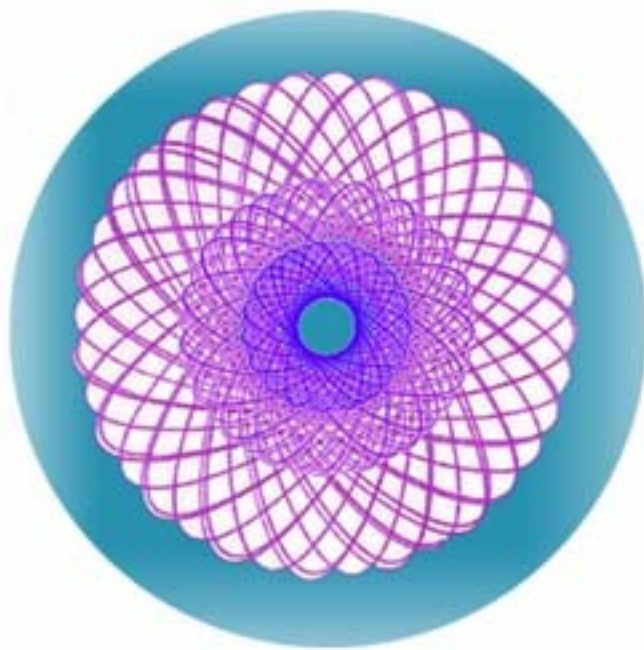


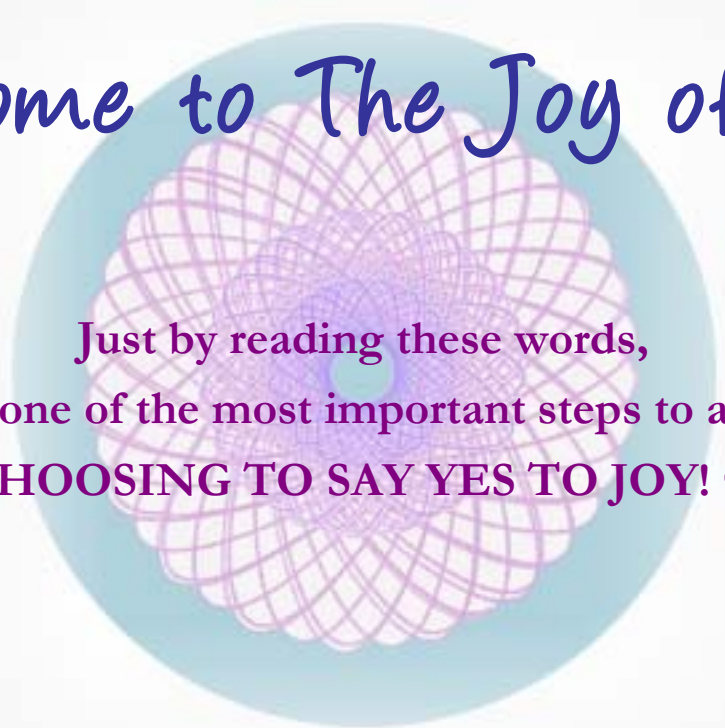
The *Joy* of Joy



*10 Activities to Fill Your Life with
Happiness and Gratitude*

by Jodi Chapman & Dan Teck

Welcome to The Joy of Joy!



Just by reading these words,
you're taking one of the most important steps to a joy-filled life:
CHOOSING TO SAY YES TO JOY! 😊

You're inviting more joy into your life. You're opening the door to happiness, vitality, ebullience, passion, excitement, *joie de vivre*, bliss, enthusiasm, and zest for life! You're saying yes to being truly alive! You're saying yes to a more joyful YOU!

Why Joy Matters

Bringing joy into your life matters because **you matter**. Your happiness matters. Walking through life engaged and vibrant and plugged in matters. Waking up and feeling excited to be in your body matters. Going through the day looking forward to what's next matters. Smiling just because matters. Laughing until tears roll down your cheeks matters. Radiating joy matters—to those who are closest to you, to everyone you come in contact with, and most of all...to YOU!

You matter so much. You are so deserving of a joy-filled life!

You weren't put on the Earth to be joyless. We know this for sure. We also know that joy is all around you—just waiting for you to notice it. It's right there in front of you—just waiting for you to reach out and grab it. And it's already within you—just waiting for you to experience it, nurture it, celebrate it, and cherish it.

We would love for you to do that—and we're so glad that you've already begun this process!

The Benefits of Joy

As you may have noticed in your own life, what you focus on tends to expand. This is certainly true about joy: the more you “feed” it with your energy and attention, the more it grows. Every time you focus on joy, you're casting a vote for a happier life—you're telling the universe, “I'd like more of this, please” (and the universe generally complies).

As the joy snowballs in your own life, its positive impact ripples outward, touching everyone you come in contact with (and everyone *they* come in contact with, and so on...)! And you will find that joy returning to you again and again and again—reflected back in the form of kindness, love, and abundance in all areas of your life. And this just makes it easier to feel even *more* joy...and the cycle continues to spiral infinitely upward!

But even if there weren't *any* long-term benefits to joy, it would still be worthwhile—because *joy is its own reward!* It's inherently worthwhile. It's an end in itself. It's the goal of all goals.

And it just feels good!

Why a Joy Activity Book?

You're probably already convinced that joy is worthwhile—but do you really need to read a *book* about it or do activities to help you nurture it? After all, people already know how to feel joy, right?

Well, look around you. Do most people seem to be overflowing with joy?

More importantly, look *within yourself*. Are YOU overflowing with joy? Do you feel like you've reached your maximum joy potential? Do you go through your days bursting with exuberance, radiating bliss, and exuding joyful vitality? Or is there room for more joy in your life?

Would you like to feel more joy?

If you're not a Master of Joy (yet!), don't worry. Just like almost anything else, you can learn to feel more joy. As with learning a foreign language, a musical instrument, or any new skill, it just takes some guidance and practice.

Practicing Joy

Practice really is the key.

In other words, not just reading about joy and thinking about joy (although this is a wonderful start!), but actually **DOING** joy—experiencing it, practicing it, and making it a regular part of your everyday life.

That's why this activity book focuses on *implementing* joy into your everyday life—in fun, easy ways. Instead of dealing with abstract theories, we offer a set of concrete tools, techniques, and practices that you can do—usually in *just a few minutes (or less)!*

But if even this is sounding like a lot of hard work, don't worry—it's not! In fact, practicing joy will probably feel more like *play!* Nothing could be easier, more natural, and more fun than to immerse yourself in the experience of joy. And once you get started, you'll probably want to keep at it.

(And that's a good thing!)

So, to help you put your joy into practice, we've brought together 10 of our favorite, tried-and-true, joyfulest activities—compiled from our ecourses (including *28 Days of Joy* and *The Magic Formula*), the *Soulful Journals* series (including *The Joy Journal* and *The Gratitude Book*), and what we enjoy in our own lives—to create a collection of “Joy's Greatest Hits” for your enjoyment!

We hope that you have fun with these activities and that you feel the joy of joy—immediately and growing throughout your life.

Ready to Play?

So, if you're ready to feel good—to invite more happiness and joy into your life—let's dive right in and immerse ourselves in the experience of *living* joy!

We're so grateful that we get to share this process with you.

Joyfully Yours,
Jodi and Dan



Activity #1: Keep a Gratitude/Joy Journal

“Gratitude journals changed my life!” ~ Oprah Winfrey

Do you keep a gratitude journal?

You may have heard people—Oprah, us, and others (perhaps *many* others) —gushing about the benefits and *joy* of keeping a gratitude journal. If you’re already in the practice of keeping one, you’ve probably experienced this firsthand—and, if not, you’re about to!

Although this practice is extremely simple, easy, and quick to do (it can literally take only a few seconds per day), it can truly transform your life. All you have to do is write down something each day that you’re grateful for—something that you appreciate or that brings you joy. You can write down big things (such as friends, family, and love), small things (such as a yummy snack or a smile from a stranger), or anything in between.

Pretty easy, right? Yet those few minutes (or even mere seconds) each day can fill you with gratitude and propel you into an upward spiral of joy.

Not only is this practice lots of fun while you’re doing it, but it also lets you relive the joy as many times as you’d like! Anytime you want, you can re-read your old lists—which is great when you’re feeling in need of a pick-me-up or just want to savor past joys...and bring the joy into your present!

We hope you’ll give it a try, and open yourself to all the joy that it can bring into your life.

3 Tips to help you get the most out of this practice

Tip #1: Keep joy within your reach!

You can keep your ongoing list in a computer file or write it by hand in a journal. We like to keep our gratitude journals by our workspaces, making it easy to jot something down each time we sit down in the morning...or whenever the mood strikes. Whether you prefer a journal on your desk, a notepad on your nightstand, or a gratitude app on your phone, keep your list somewhere easy to see, reach, and *use* every day. (Which leads us to our second tip...)

Tip #2: Make a habit of it!

Feel free to write as much as you’d like on any given day, but we encourage you to write at least one thing each day over the next 28 days. This will turn your gratitude-and-joy practice into a habit, so that by the end of the month, feeling and expressing gratitude and joy should be second nature to you—flowing as easily and naturally as breathing in and out.

Tip #3: Don't just write it...FEEL it!

Lastly, to really *feel* the benefit of your gratitude/joy journal, remember to do exactly that—namely, FEEL it! As you write about the people, things, and experiences that fill you with gratitude and joy, take a moment to savor that feeling. Allow the joy to circulate throughout your entire being. Feel it vibrate and grow within you. Feel the whole-body smile it produces.

Breathe it. Relish it. Bathe in it. Savor it.

Enjoy it!

Bonus Activity: Gratitude Blast

If you'd like to jumpstart your gratitude practice, write down (as quickly as you can) 100 or more things that fill you with gratitude or joy. Or, if you prefer, set a timer and write non-stop for 20 minutes (or 5, 10, 15, or whatever feels right). Or you can see how quickly you can fill up this page, listing anything and everything you're grateful for—big, small, current, or long-ago memories—anything positive and joyful that comes into your mind (and heart).

Have a blast!

my DAILY GRATITUDE & JOY LIST

Print out this page (or copy it into a computer file) and add at least one thing each day for at least 28 days—and feel the habit of feeling/expressing gratitude and joy becoming second nature!

<u>Date</u>	<i>I am grateful for...</i>
<hr/>	<hr/>
<hr/>	<hr/>
<hr/>	<hr/>
<hr/>	<hr/>
<hr/>	<hr/>
<hr/>	<hr/>
<hr/>	<hr/>
<hr/>	<hr/>
<hr/>	<hr/>
<hr/>	<hr/>
<hr/>	<hr/>
<hr/>	<hr/>
<hr/>	<hr/>
<hr/>	<hr/>
<hr/>	<hr/>
<hr/>	<hr/>
<hr/>	<hr/>
<hr/>	<hr/>
<hr/>	<hr/>
<hr/>	<hr/>
<hr/>	<hr/>
<hr/>	<hr/>
<hr/>	<hr/>
<hr/>	<hr/>
<hr/>	<hr/>
<hr/>	<hr/>
<hr/>	<hr/>
<hr/>	<hr/>
<hr/>	<hr/>
<hr/>	<hr/>
<hr/>	<hr/>
<hr/>	<hr/>
<hr/>	<hr/>
<hr/>	<hr/>
<hr/>	<hr/>
<hr/>	<hr/>
<hr/>	<hr/>
<hr/>	<hr/>
<hr/>	<hr/>
<hr/>	<hr/>
<hr/>	<hr/>
<hr/>	<hr/>
<hr/>	<hr/>
<hr/>	<hr/>
<hr/>	<hr/>



Activity #2: Daily Bookends of Gratitude and Joy

Waking up on the Right Side of the Bed

Before you even get out of bed in the morning, you can propel yourself into an upward or downward emotional spiral.

It's like you start your day in the middle of a multi-level parking lot. Your first thoughts put you onto either the Up ramp or the Down ramp. Yes, if you get on the Down ramp ("waking up on the wrong side of the bed") you can reverse that, but it's so much easier to continue the positive momentum of starting off heading upward.

The good news is that you can consciously create this upward momentum by starting each morning with even a single thought that fills you with gratitude or joy!

Tomorrow morning, before you even get out of bed, spend a few moments thinking of something uplifting—something that starts your day on the emotional "Up Ramp." It might be something you're looking forward to that day, someone you're especially grateful for, or the first joyous thought that pops into your mind...and your heart!

As with your gratitude journal, to get the full benefit of this practice, don't just think about the joy, but really FEEL it! Spend a minute or two basking in the good vibrations that go with this thought! And then let that upward spiral continue throughout your day!

Resting in Joy

You can also do something similar right before you fall asleep at night—to send you off into sweet dreams!

You may want to return to what you thought about when you woke up, reflect on positive elements from your day, or let new sources of joy and gratitude drift into your heart and mind. This way, instead of counting sheep, you can send yourself off to blissful slumber by counting your blessings!

If you'd like to remember and relive your joyful morning and/or evening thoughts, feel free to write about them here—or add them to your gratitude journal!

Bonus Activity: Smile Shower

In addition to your daily bookends of joy, another great time to bask in grateful feelings is during your morning shower. It's also a perfect place to add an element that's sure to lift your mood: Spend your entire shower with a huge smile on your face. (The bigger and sillier, the better!)

Whether or not you're thinking of anything you're grateful for, just smiling for that long has been scientifically proven to create an internal shower of happiness! (It's also one place you can do this where you won't have to worry about anyone thinking you're crazy—as opposed to, say, on the subway.)

And if you do this shortly after your morning minute of gratitude and joy, you're sure to build on the upward momentum you started by waking up on the right side of the bed—a practice that's instantly fun and sure to pay joyous dividends throughout your day!



Activity #3: The Gratitude Game

This is a simple, fun game that you can play with one other person or in a group. All you do is go from one person to another, saying things that you're grateful for. That's it! So simple, yet guaranteed to lift your spirits. (We play this game any time we're feeling down, and it *always* elevates our moods.)

You can play for a predetermined length of time, until you feel your mood improve, or as long as you'd like.

However you play it, The Gratitude Game is a great way to tap into your own gratitude, share it with others, and be inspired by what other people are grateful for as well! Enjoy sharing the gratitude!

Bonus Activity: Gratitude-Game Experiences

After you play The Gratitude Game, write down your experiences.

- Did you notice a shift in your mood?
- How did the other person/people enjoy it?
- Did you learn anything about them...or about yourself?
- Did it bring you more joy?

Answer these questions, or describe anything else that came up for you during or after the game.



What would you do if you noticed your car's gas gauge on (or below) empty? You'd stop and get gas, right? Yet how often do you keep driving *yourself* without filling up your own personal "tank"? How often do you neglect self-care while you keep going and going...until you run out of gas?

It can be extremely challenging (to say the least) to feel joy—much less exude and spread it—when you're going on little to no sleep, not eating enough healthy food (or enough, period), or running yourself ragged to the point of exhaustion or illness. When you do practice self-care, however, it's a whole lot easier to feel gratitude and joy—and to share it with others by giving from your "overflow"!

Is Self-Care Selfish?

Although the idea of self-care is steadily gaining acceptance in our society, many people still consider it selfish to put yourself first. On the other hand, some people get upset if you say to put *others* first—your work, your family, or even service to humanity. They may feel that this is unhealthy.

Yet we feel that both of these sides miss this key point: ***Self-care isn't either/or—it's win-win!***

The choice is not between sacrificing yourself or sacrificing others. The choice is between sacrificing both or neither.

It's probably clear in your own life (and in the lives of those around you): when your own tank is full, you're more fun (and inspiring and pleasant and *joyful*) to be around, you have more to offer, and you set a great example for your children or anyone else in your life.

And you just feel better.

Self-Care: Inside and Out

Everyone practices self-care in their own way. For some, it might mean getting a manicure or a massage. For others, it might mean taking a quiet walk in the woods. And for someone else, it could mean taking a day off...without waiting to get sick! (A "Health Day"!)!

Regardless of how you express it, self-care is about much more than just external activities (although these are important). Self-care starts from the inside—from a healthy sense of self-esteem. It's a deep knowing that you deserve to feel good, live fully, and realize your dreams and desires—knowing that you deserve a life of joy!

But healthy self-esteem is only one half of self-care. The other half is the healthy expression of healthy self-esteem—in other words, taking action, practicing it, and *living* it!

The more you practice self-care, the more your self-esteem increases. And the more your self-esteem increases, the more you practice self-care...and so on and so on, in a wonderful, never-ending upward spiral!

Me Time

This activity (#4) is to give yourself the gift of self-care time, or “Me Time”! This is time that’s just for you to enjoy however you’d like to—a time free from work, chores, or any obligations. A time that nourishes, honors, and recharges you. During your Me Time, you can read an uplifting book, write in your journal, meditate, listen to your favorite music, or do anything else that feeds your soul.

You can make it one hour per day or, if it’s more comfortable and realistic, just 20-30 minutes for yourself. And if this seems like too much time, consider this: If you sleep eight hours per night, then one hour is a mere 6% of your waking hours; 30 minutes is only 3%, and 20 minutes is a mere 2%! (And if you sleep less than eight hours per night, these percentages are even lower!) If you can devote 94-98% or more of your time to work, chores, and taking care of others, **aren’t you worth at least 2-6% of your own life?**

Regardless of how much Me Time you take, the important part is that you give yourself something, that you put yourself on your own to-do list, and that you reinforce the underlying message that YOU MATTER!

Me-Time Activities

Write down some ideas of things you might do during your Me Time. (You can come up with new joyful activities or pull from your ongoing list!)

Me-Time Schedule and Check-In

To assure that your Me Time doesn't get pushed to the bottom of your list (or off the list altogether), schedule some time—preferably every day—that's devoted to you, your self-care, and your joy.

Before too long, Me Time will probably feel as natural as taking time to brush your teeth or take a shower. To help you get to that point, you can fill in the chart below for your first 7 sessions. Schedule the dates/times in advance, and after you take each Me-Time session, write what you did.

Date/Time	What I Did

Remember, self-care isn't just a gift to yourself—it's a gift to everyone in your life! As you incorporate self-care and Me Time into your everyday routine, you'll find that you have more to give to others and are more fun to be around! Most importantly, though, you'll feel more joyful, more alive, and more fully YOU!

And *that* is the best gift possible! 😊



Activity #5: The Joy of Giving...and Receiving

Self-care—giving yourself time, joy, and loving attention—doesn't preclude giving to others. In fact, when you're overflowing with gratitude, joy, energy, and an abundance of love, it makes it a whole lot easier to share that with others. And when you're able to give in this way, you'll find that it can be one of the most joyous parts of your life.

Studies show that one of the best ways to elevate your mood is by giving—whether it's through volunteering, helping someone in need, or surprising someone with the perfect gift. But you don't need clinical research to tell you what you've probably experienced in your own life—that *giving is FUN!* Just think of how good you feel when you give someone a thoughtful birthday (or Christmas or anniversary or “just-because”) present...and watch them light up with joy as they open it!

Giving Freely

While it certainly can be fun to wow someone with a big, expensive present, many of the greatest gifts are absolutely free—such as compliments, good deeds, or simply being present with another person.

Compliments are wonderful “word-gifts”—ways to convey your joy and appreciation. You can also show appreciation without words—through kind deeds, such as holding open a door, doing a favor, offering a smile, or performing a conscious act of kindness. Or you can simply give someone the present of your presence—just spending time together, listening, sharing a moment, and giving them your undivided attention (an increasingly precious phenomenon in this age of multi-tasking and fast-paced technology!). Sometimes just BEing with someone is the most profound gift of all.

The Triangle of Giving

A few years ago, a life coach introduced us to a beautiful concept: the Triangle of Giving. She said that when something is given, three parties benefit:

- **The Giver** – because it feels good to give and to be of service;
- **The Receiver** – because they are receiving something of value; and
- **The Observer** – because witnessing an act of giving/receiving strengthens (or even restores) their faith in humanity—or it just makes them happy.

This is true with any type of giving: physical gifts, services, or compliments. To use our earlier example of someone opening a wonderful birthday present, you'd probably feel joy just watching—even if you weren't the giver *or* the receiver! You could still enjoy watching the gift-receiver's face light up and appreciate the giver's joy at giving this present—and feel warmed by observing this whole process.

The same is true with free gifts such as compliments: not only does it feel nice to compliment someone and great to receive a compliment, but it's heart-warming to witness compliments, even if you're not directly involved. (And don't worry if no one else is around to directly witness a compliment—you can rest assured that the person being complimented will almost always tell at least one other person about the nice compliment they received!)

Give It Up!

So, for this activity, give someone a gift today. It can be a large, elaborate present, a simple compliment, or even just the gift of your time and attention—"the present of your presence"!

And if you happen to find yourself on another end of the giving/receiving/witnessing triangle, keep in mind that these are all important sides of the same phenomenon. So remember to give openly, receive joyfully (and graciously), and feel grateful to be involved in *any* step of this process—and keep the joyful energy flowing!

Bonus Activity: Describe your experiences in the Triangle of Giving

After you've given (or received or witnessed) a gift, describe your experience—what happened, how it made you feel, and how it increased your joy! You can do this once, or keep a running record of all the gift-giving you're part of—in any way. And each time you update your list, you get to re-experience the joy of giving!



Activity #6: Evidence of Joy

Focusing on joy doesn't mean that you'll never feel sorrow, anger, boredom, and the rest of the emotional spectrum. You will—and that's good! You don't want an emotionally flat, monotonous existence. You want to feel the full range of human emotions—and not deny yourself natural, healthy inner (and outer) experiences.

After all, it's healthy to feel sorrow or grief when you receive sad news. It's natural to feel upset by troubling circumstances. And it's totally understandable to go through emotional ups and downs (sometimes for no discernible reason at all). This is part of being human.

But you also don't want to get stuck in an oppressive emotional state. You don't want to get trapped in a vicious cycle of feeling bad and then looking for more reasons to feel bad (probably without even realizing you're doing this)—a self-perpetuating cycle that feeds on negativity and blocks you from the joy that's all around you. You don't want to feel so trapped by a non-joyful emotional state that you forget that you've ever felt joyful before...and that you will feel joyful again!

That's why it can be particularly helpful to compile a “mountain of evidence” of all the joy you've felt throughout your life—and to remind yourself that if you've felt joy before (and you have), you can feel it again (and you will)!


Take some time to collect some of your most joyful moments. Search your inner “photo album” (and maybe some literal photo albums as well!) for evidence of joy that you've experienced throughout your life. And then record those instances in your Joy Journal or in any other way. (One of our favorite ways to do this is through an “Evidence Board”—which is like a vision board, but for things that have already happened. If you'd like to create an Evidence Board of Joy, simply put up pictures, words, memorabilia, or anything else that provides evidence of joy you've already felt.)

If you're not sure what to write about (or what sort of things to put on your Evidence Board), here are some prompts to get you started:

- **Most Joyful Moments Ever** – What are some of the BIGGEST joys you've ever felt? The “highlight reel” of joy—your absolute “Top 10” Joy Moments?
- **Joy through the Ages** – Mentally review each decade of your life (0-9, 10-19, 20s, 30s, etc.), and pick out at each least one joyful memory from each 10-year period.
- **Triumphant Joy** – Describe at least one victory you've experienced throughout your life—no matter how small (e.g., winning a game as a kid) or large (getting a major award, promotion, or honor as an adult). How joyful did you feel in that moment of triumph?
- **Cool Joy** – When in your life have you felt the coolest? What made you feel cool? How much joy did this feeling bring you? Can you describe this feeling (and perhaps even tap into a bit of it) right now?
- **Spiritual Joy** – Have you ever felt a sense of profound spiritual joy? Perhaps you had a particularly intense experience in meditation, kundalini yoga, or just spontaneous spiritual rapture. Or, if you think about it in psychological terms, when have you had a “peak experience”?

What other pieces of joyful “evidence” can you remember? Whether they’re big life moments (such as a graduation or the birth of a child) or small, quiet moments of joy (such as a particularly peaceful walk in nature), take some time to remember and write about (and/or put up pictures or other visual representations on your Evidence Board) any moments when you’ve experienced joy in your life.

Whether you remember many joyful times or only one single moment, it still provides evidence that you are capable of feeling joy. And if you’ve done it before, you’ll do it again! ☺



Activity #7: Joy Family

As you reflect on the many sources of joy in your life—all the places, things, events, and experiences that bring you happiness—you may find that some of your greatest joys have come from connecting with another person.

Sometimes these joyful connections can be deep, soulful, lifelong bonds—such as you might feel with a partner, a best friend, or a close relative. Other times, they might take the form of brief encounters—a smile from a stranger, a few friendly words exchanged with a co-worker, or a casual acquaintance who brightens your day.

Some people find these joyful connections with their biological family. Others create (or find) their own “Soul Family”—the people in their “tribe” who love, cherish, and really *get* them. In addition to these two types of families, you can also surround yourself with a “Joy Family”—people who bring you joy: big joys, little joys, lifelong joys, brief joys, or *any* type of joy.

You might already be surrounded by your Joy Family, or you might be in the early stages of bringing your Joy Family into your life. In either case, starting right now, you’re going to nurture and cultivate your Joy Family tree—and find joy in every branch!

Nurturing Your Joy Family Tree

Today, you get to go through a four-step process for cultivating and nurturing your Joy Family tree—or, if this is a new concept for you, *planting* the tree! Here are the steps:

First, make a list of all the people in your Joy Family—anyone who brings you joy of any kind—and write down *how* they bring you joy. It can be a deep, lifelong connection or simply a spark of joy from a casual acquaintance. It could be a profound joy or a small, simple joy. Write it all down—and, as you write, see if you can tap into the feeling of joy they bring you.

After you've listed the members of your current Joy Family, **imagine your *ideal* Joy Family**. Are there specific joyful people who you'd like to connect with—to bring into your “family”? Is there anyone already in your Joy Family that you'd like to spend more time with? Or is there a general dynamic that you'd like to change, regardless of which specific individuals are involved (e.g., working with members of your Joy Family or spending more holidays and special occasions with your Joy Family)?

Write down your ideal scenario of what (and whom) you'd like your Joy Family to look like and the role you'd like them to play in your life.

Next, write down different ways you might be able to move toward this ideal. Perhaps you could make an effort to form a new friendship. Perhaps you could deepen an existing one. You might decide to reach out to someone you've admired from afar. Or you could tell your existing Joy Family that you'd like to plan a special get-together—for a holiday, a special event, or maybe even a “Joy Family Reunion”!

...and then ACT!

Because this isn't a book on the Theory of Joy or just a collection of writing prompts, make your Joy-Family activity exactly that—namely, an *activity!* Take an active step to nurture your Joy Family. Connect with someone in your existing Joy Family, reach out to someone you'd like to bring into your ideal Joy Family, or pick any of the steps you wrote about above and *do* it...joyfully! ☺



Activity #8: Joyful Movement

We admit it: we've never been into exercise.

Neither of us has ever had any desire to “get ripped,” “feel the burn,” or buy into the motto of “no pain, no gain.” (Our mindset is more along the lines of “no pain, no pain.”) The mere thought of hitting the gym, pumping iron, jogging on a treadmill, or doing any kind of disciplined workout is enough to turn our stomachs. Even the word “exercise” conjures all sorts of negative associations for us: tedium, chore, discomfort, and pain—pretty much the antithesis of joy!

But we also know that physical health is a key component of the body/mind/spirit trio.

This dilemma was resolved for us by a holistic nurse who reframed the situation with a single word: *MOVEMENT*.

Instead of focusing on *exercise*, she suggested that we simply make a point of moving our bodies every day—which could take the form of dancing, walking around the neighborhood, playing fun games on our Wii system, or anything else that would get our bodies moving and our blood pumping!

Thinking of it in this way seemed much more appealing. We no longer had to concern ourselves with reps, pain, or discipline. Instead, **we got have fun in motion!**

Now, we know that many people derive tremendous pleasure from working out, reaching their fitness goals, and experiencing the endorphin rush that often accompanies cardiovascular workouts. If you fall into this camp, great! We heartily encourage you to keep on feeling the joy of exercise!

If, however, your mindset in this area is closer to ours, we invite you to try out the simple shift that's helped us so much: instead of thinking in terms of *exercise*, **find fun forms of movement to enjoy on a regular basis.**

Consider all the types of movement you've enjoyed throughout your life—and some that you might enjoy in the future. Whether it's dancing, walking, sports, yoga, martial arts, playing Twister, Wii Fitness, or even working out at the gym (if you truly enjoy it, more power to ya!)—list any type of movement that is (or might become) a source of joy for you.

Joyful Movement: Past, Present, and Future

Past – List the types of movement you’ve enjoyed in the past (e.g., sports you used to play or exercises you enjoyed at some point in the past).

Present – List all the types of joyful movement you currently enjoy doing (on a regular basis or even occasionally).

Future – List the types of joyful movement that you don’t currently do but might like to make a part of your life—either things that you used to do and might like to get back to, or perhaps things that you’ve never done but might enjoy trying.

Joyful Movement Today, Tomorrow, and Beyond!

Finally, pick one type of movement from any of your lists above, and do it today. And if you enjoy it, do it again tomorrow, the next day, and beyond...for as long as you keep enjoying it! ☺



Activity #9: Trigger Happy

Although we've referred to this book's joy exercises as "activities," we also could have called them "reminders." After all, joy is already within you and all around you—sometimes all you need is a reminder to tap into it, appreciate it, and enjoy it!

In addition to this book's reminders, you can also create your own: You can write yourself a note. You can schedule an email or text message to be sent to you. You can ask a friend to remind you to feel joy. Or you can even tie a string to your finger. (We don't know anyone who's ever actually done this, but for some reason it's often used as a symbol of reminders.)

There's no single right way—whatever works for you is great! But some of the best reminders are the ones that you don't have to create—the ones that already exist in the world. In fact, you can use just about *anything* as a reminder to feel joy. The key is to choose—and *use*—your own "joy trigger."

Choose Your Own Personal Joy Trigger

You already use triggers in your daily life. Perhaps every time you get out of the shower, you brush your teeth. Or after you finish dinner, you usually turn on the TV (or computer). Or when you get home from work you change your shoes (like Mr. Rogers used to do!).

All a trigger means is that when x happens, you do y . Even if the two aren't inherently related, they become linked in your life. They go together because you usually (perhaps even always) do one after the other— x triggers y because you've decided that it will.

So, today you're going to pick something from your everyday life and *decide* that it will trigger joy for you. It doesn't have to be something that ever made you joyful before, but now you're going to use it as your personal reminder to tap into the joy that's *already* inside you—the joy that's *always* there waiting for you to feel it!

For instance, if you work in a building with an elevator, every time you ride in the elevator, you could tap into your inner joy. Or you could use red lights as your joy trigger—any time you're stopped at a red light, use that time to feel joyful. Or you could use bird songs as your reminder—every time you hear birds chirping or singing, let that remind you to come back to joy.

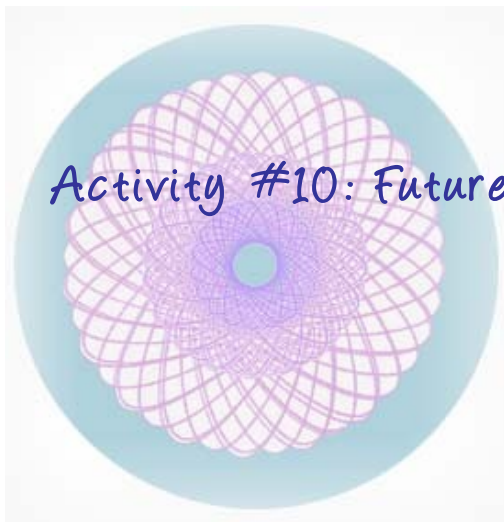
Whatever you choose, make sure it's something that happens fairly often (probably at least once on most days) but not almost constantly (such as seeing electric light or the color white). Choose something "ordinary" and make it special for you—simply by deciding that it will trigger joy for you. You can tell others, or it can be your own little secret source of joy.

Write your joy trigger here: _____

After you've chosen your joy trigger, consciously use it again and again—consistently tapping into joy each time you experience your chosen trigger, until it becomes ingrained as a habit. Soon, it will become so reflexive that you won't even have to consciously think about it anymore. You'll just and feel joyful whenever you hear a bird chirping, tie your shoe laces, ride in an elevator, stop at a red light, see anything with stripes, unlock your door,...or whatever you choose.

Remember, the trigger doesn't have to be anything extraordinary. (In fact, the more commonplace, the better—you want it to be something you experience every day.) The trigger itself is just a *reminder* to feel joy—but the joy is always present and accessible. It's always within, ready to rise to the surface at a moment's (or trigger's) notice!

The trigger can be absolutely anything you choose. The important part is what it triggers in you: JOY! ☺



Activity #10: Future Joy

The message of this book and all of its activities can be summarized in three words: **FEEL JOY NOW!**

That doesn't mean, however, that you can only derive joy from what's in your life right at this moment. For instance, reflecting on happy moments (or "evidence of joy") can bring you joy in the present—even if you're thinking of something that happened years ago!

Likewise, you can derive present-time joy from things that haven't happened yet—for instance, looking forward to a party, a milestone, a reunion with a loved one, or an idealized future that you'd love to create!

Let's imagine this super-duper joyful future right now...

Your Joyfullest Future

If everything in your life goes as wonderfully, successfully, and joyfully as it could possibly go, what will your life look like five years from now? Can you imagine a scene—or a series of scenes—that encapsulates this dazzling level of joy? What does your life look like? Where are you? Who are you with? What are you doing? And, most importantly of all: *How do you feel?*

We imagine that you feel extremely joyful, right?

Can you feel even a small bit of this joy right now? Can you tap into how wonderful it would feel to be living this scene—this life? Or can you feel excitement or anticipation, just knowing that this is a possibility for you? Can you feel some of those positive feelings right now—not five years from now, but right in this very moment?

To help you tap into this joy, let's try a little thought-game: Imagine that, aside from being off-the-charts happy, the ideal-future you has an amazing power: you can magically send yourself emotions from the future to yourself in the present. Your energy/emotion transcends space and time—so that future-joy arrives in your heart...right now!

Can you feel the joy? If so, guess what—you've just experienced the most important part of your idealized vision! You've reached the goal of that goal—and you didn't even have to wait five minutes (much less five years) for it!

Think about it: Why would you want everything in the scene you imagined? Why would you want a nice house and car, a loving relationship, a fulfilling career (or non-career), or anything else that you visualized or fantasized about? Why would you want to have or do *anything*? Presumably, because you believe that it will make you happier—it will make you more joyful! (And then, of course, you get to spread the joy—which multiplies it for everyone!)

Everything that you can imagine in your idealized five-year vision is, presumably, a means to an end—and JOY is that end! **Joy is the goal!** So by feeling that joy now, you've just taken a shortcut to your ideal life—and started living the most important part immediately!

Yes, we know that you can't always predict the future—at least not right down to the tiniest detail (although this does happen occasionally). Situations arise unexpectedly. Unforeseen opportunities present themselves. Or you

might simply have a change of heart—a shift in what you *want*—and end up living a new passion that you don't even know about yet. There are so many reasons why your actual, external life might not look exactly like your idealized vision. It could end up being much better—or perhaps just different. And that might be even more ideal than your ideal!

The one part that you know won't change, however, is the joy! (It wouldn't be a very ideal future if it were joyless, now would it?) By tapping into that joy right now, you not only feel better immediately, but you also help to attract a more joyful future to you (through the principle of “like attracts like”). So don't worry that feeling joy now will in any way stifle your likelihood of manifesting a more joyful future. If anything, it gives you a huge headstart!

So, as you move into your future, why not give yourself the best of both worlds: Allow your heart to fill—and your imagination to run wild—with joyful fantasies of all the joy awaiting you in the future. And start feeling that joy right now—without waiting another second! That way, as you move into your joyful future, you'll get to enjoy the journey *and* the destination!

Drawing a Picture of Joy

Take some time to brainstorm and, if you'd like, write down or actually draw a picture of some of the elements that might be part of your ideal future. You can include any details you'd like: your ideal place to live, who you'd like to be with, what you'd like to be doing, etc., as well as how you'd like to feel—physically, emotionally, spiritually—or any other aspect of your ideal future!

After you've pictured and described your ideal future, take some time to tap into the joy of that scene—just as if you were already living it—right now! How does it feel?

Remember, you may have to wait for the future to arrive, but you never have to wait to feel joy!

Bonus Activity: Return to the Scene

Re-read your description of this ideal scene every day for the next 28 days (which, as you know, ingrains it as a habit—literally rewiring your neural pathways to lead naturally to this vision/feeling!). As you read your description, visualize the scene and imagine it with your other senses as well (hearing, touching, etc.). And, perhaps most importantly at all, feel the intense joy you associate with being in this scene—and living the life it represents!

As you return to the scene, feel free to add to it, tweak any of the details to make them more to your liking, or simply bask in the scene exactly the way you wrote it the first time—and even though it's a scene of your future, see how much of its joy you can experience right in the present moment!



A Final Reminder: Your Core of Joy

Thank you so much for taking this journey of joy with us—and for exploring *The Joy of Joy!* It's been a pleasure and a privilege for us to share some of our favorite techniques for tapping into joy. We hope that it's helped to bring more joy into your life and to deepen your appreciation for the many elements of joy surrounding us all.

Throughout this book, you've identified and experienced many sources of joy: people, places, things, activities, and so much more. You've reflected on past joys, imagined future joys, and surrounded yourself with many sources of present joy!

All of this is wonderful. Hopefully, the lessons have made you more aware of the joy all around you, and the activities have helped you bring some of it into your life—and to expand on the joy you already feel!

Before we finish, however, we feel it's important to remind you of this key distinction: *You don't need to have any external reason to feel joy!* You can always find joy within you—for no reason at all—because joy is at the very core of your being. It's who you are! You don't have to postpone joy until all of your external stars align (or fall into the “I'll be happy when...” trap). All you have to do is tap into your joyful inner essence—any time, any place, under any circumstances—and you can feel joy!

Yes, we know that when you're in your darkest moments—or even just feeling a bit “blah”—it might not feel like you're made out of joy. Or you might feel that your inner joy has been so covered up by hurts, disappointments, or distractions of everyday life that you're not sure if you'll ever be able to bring that joy to the surface again. You might even feel that your inner flame of joy has been extinguished. And yes, sometimes that flame burns more brightly than other times—but trust us, it's always there...even if it's just a little “pilot light” of joy within you. And you can always focus on that, nurture it, and let it grow—even without any external assistance or “joy sources.”

So, if this is true, what's the point of focusing on outer joy sources? Why have we spent so much time reflecting on externals? Why didn't we go straight for the source—especially if, like Dorothy's ruby slippers, we had it with us all along?

The reason is: all of those externals helped to awaken the joy that always was (and always is) inside you. They helped to feed it, nourish it, and fan its flame. But you needed to start with some joy already—you needed to have a flame to fan! If you didn't already have an inner core of joy, none of those externals could have made you feel joyful. They wouldn't have had any place to land, take root, or grow within you. The joy had to start within you!

And it did.

So, as you continue your journey of joy, we hope that you'll continue to give thanks for all these joy-awakening externals—to cherish them, appreciate them, and make them bigger and bigger parts of your life. And even more than that, we hope you'll remember that the joy these externals awaken within you is *already* part of who you are. It's always there. And although you have many reasons to feel joyful, you can feel joy for no reason at all—because joy is who you are!

Bonus Activity: Smile for No Reason

One effective (and enjoyable) way to tap into your core of joy is to smile for no reason. Even if you're not feeling particularly joyful, just smile—for a minute or two, or as long as it takes to awaken your core of joy. Even if there's no external reason, you'll probably find that core of joy awakening within you.

Now *that's* a reason to smile! ☺



About the Authors

Jodi Chapman and Dan Teck

Jodi and Dan have been happily married since 2004. They are the creative duo behind the [Soulful Life Sanctuary](#), as well as the bestselling *Soulful Journals* series (including *The Joy Journal* and *The Gratitude Book*) and numerous ecourses (including *28 Days of Joy* and *Soulful Love*). They live in southern Oregon, where they share their lives with their sweet cats: Biddle, Buncom, and Elsie.

Jodi and Dan feel so blessed to spend their days together—creating joyously, connecting with so many soulful people each day, and sharing this amazing journey with an ever-growing community of loving souls all around the world.

Jodi Chapman is the award-winning author of the personal-growth blog, *Soul Speak*, the popular BeliefNet column, *Heart of the Soul*, and the *Coming Back to Life* ecourse (and upcoming book of the same name). She is also a certified Law of Attraction Practitioner and the founder of the Soul Shakers and Authentic Connecting communities. Jodi wears her heart on her sleeve and tends to attract others into her life who do the same. She inspires thousands with her loving words, and it's her heart's desire to continue helping others reconnect with their soul and plug back into their life.

Dan Teck is the author of the personal-growth blog, *Halfway up the Mountain*. In addition to his blog and *Soulful Journals*, Dan writes novels, screenplays, and personal-growth books. He is also a certified Life-Optimization Coach and a certified Law of Attraction Practitioner. He received a B.A. in Religious Studies from Vassar College and an M.F.A. in Creative Writing from Mills College, and has spent over 25 years studying, practicing, and teaching a wide variety of spiritual paths and personal-growth techniques. Through his books, courses, and coaching sessions, Dan has helped thousands of people move into the life of their dreams while feeling grateful for the life they already have. He would love to help you experience greater joy, reach your goals, and turn your dreams into reality!

About the Soulful Life Sanctuary

The Soulful Life Sanctuary is a loving, supportive community, a virtual classroom/retreat center, and a set of tools/resources to help you live your most radiant, authentic, soulful life. It's packed with soulful goodies—including ALL of Jodi and Dan's courses and many other live/archived classes, plus unlimited access to over a dozen sacred spaces (led by experts in Wellness, Abundance, Soulful Parenting, Spirituality, Joy, and other areas), community forums, blogs, membership pages, a shop of soulful products/services, and so much more.



Please [click here](#) to learn more and find out how you can begin your Soulful Life Sanctuary membership today! And if you sign up before July 31, you'll receive an earlybird discount + over \$800 in bonus gifts!

Thank you for taking the time to connect with us, with yourself, and with the joy within you. We look forward to continuing this joyful journey together! 😊

Hugs and Joy,
Jodi and Dan