

The Expansion Exercise

EVALUATING THE BALANCE BETWEEN WHAT DEPLETES YOU & WHAT ENERGIZES YOU

Each week, our lives consist of a series of activities, some of which feel draining and others which feel more expansive. Although we can't always avoid being in environments or around certain people who may deplete us, we can choose to prioritize things (activities, environments, routines, friends) which bring energy and light into our lives.

This little exercise will help you evaluate what is currently shaping your life. It's about awareness, so that you can build a more beautiful life by intentionally choosing more of what feels expansive and maybe less of what slowly dulls or shrinks you. On this page, I'll list some examples for each category and on the second page, it will be left blank for you to fill out on your own. Afterwards, compare the lists. Was it easier to think of things for one side or the other? Are they balanced or not at all? What expansive, aligned, energizing activities can you prioritize for yourself moving forward?

Things That Feel Constrictive:

- | | | |
|---------------------------|-----------------------------|--|
| • doomscrolling | • suppressing ambition | • too much time online |
| • rushing constantly | • isolation | • chaotic environments |
| • constant stress | • burnout | • clutter and disorganization |
| • financial anxiety | • procrastination | • abandoned my goals |
| • people-pleasing | • toxic relationships | • critical people around me |
| • negative self-talk | • hating my job | • eating crap food |
| • not moving my body | • excessive screen time | • too much bad news |
| • feeling uninspired | • overstimulation | • bad situations |
| • survival mode | • not making time for joy | • feeling emotionally reactive |
| • staying inside too long | • waiting for life to begin | • shame around wanting more |
| • neglecting my body | • disconnected from nature | • made to feel selfish or silly |
| • poor sleep | • no community | • feeling judged by family/friends |
| • overcommitting | • gossip | • abandoning routines that make me feel good |
| • comparison | | |

Things That Feel Expansive:

- | | | |
|-------------------------------------|-----------------------------|------------------------------------|
| • long walks | • creativity | • lighting a candle at night |
| • beautiful spaces | • travel | • swimming in the ocean |
| • deep conversations | • sunlight | • getting flowers at the market |
| • movement | • leisure | • people watching |
| • reading | • feeling physically strong | • dancing in the kitchen |
| • nature | • romanticizing life | • having a clean, beautiful home |
| • friendship | • swinging on a swingset | • meaningful eye contact |
| • getting dressed well | • watching the sunset | • getting excited about the future |
| • ambitious goals | • starting a new hobby | • slowing down to notice my life |
| • laughing so hard my stomach hurts | • reading at a cafe | • hearing birds in the morning |
| | • romanticizing my life | • driving with the windows down |

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*Things That
Drain Me:*

*Things That
Energize Me:*

Reflection: Which one reflects your everyday life more accurately right now? What has been making your life feel smaller, heavier, rushed or disconnected lately.. and what consistently makes you feel more alive, energized, inspired or like yourself again? Are there habits, environments or relationships you may have outgrown? What would happen if you intentionally built your life around the things that expand you instead of simply tolerating what drains you? Beautiful lives are often shaped slowly, through small choices, repeated consistently over time.

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