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EMBRACING SPONTANEITY

The Planner's Guide to
Finding Balance

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This ebook is for all my planners out there. I know you because I am you. My schedule used to be packed everyday and very busy. Vibrant Badass started as an outlet for me to grow in life outside my 9-5 schedule because I didn't want my job to define my life. It has taken me on a journey of so much fun and adventure. Everything in this book comes from engaging these tactics in my own life and studying countless personal growth books over the year.

My hope for this ebook is that it helps you be less stressed and have fun in your everyday life. You deserve it! I can't wait to hear your stories of where the ideas in this ebook take you.

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CHAPTER

INTRODUCTION

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INTRODUCTION

Imagine a life where every day is a canvas, waiting for the vibrant strokes of spontaneity to weave unexpected masterpieces of joy and fulfillment. What if you could break free from the chains of rigid schedules and embrace the symphony of life's beautiful surprises? Have you ever felt the tinge of regret when a missed opportunity to say "yes" to an adventure leaves you wondering what could have been? If these scenarios resonate with you, then you are about to embark on a journey that will forever change the way you experience the world around you. Welcome to a realm where the ordinary transforms into the extraordinary - a realm where planning meets serendipity, and the magic of the unknown awaits your embrace.



Does this sound familiar?

- You're accustomed to juggling numerous responsibilities and commitments.
- If someone wants to hang out with you, you have to look weeks or even months in the future to find time.
- You have a system for your calendar and are always worried about the next thing.
- There are lots of activities on your schedule but they feel draining rather than nourishing for your soul.
- You take care of everyone around you and leave yourself as the lowest priority.
- You feel like you have lost sight of your own wants and desires and don't know who you are anymore.
- Free time and/or self-care feels like a fantasy land so far away from your reality.
- You feel tired and overwhelmed.
- Busy is your default but you yearn for more enjoyment and fulfillment.
- Even vacation isn't relaxing because you have to plan every part of it and carry the mental load.

If you relate to any of the sentiments above, I'm so glad you are here.

I understand this struggle firsthand. In college, I remember when I started noticing how most people would say “busy but good” as the answer to a casual "how are you" question. They didn't usually talk about the fun things they were busy with but instead the general feeling of having too much going on. I used to be the ultimate super planner in life and did my best to stay in control of everything. I experienced anxiety when things deviated from the plan or when I was faced with the unknown. Spoiler alert - there are a ton of unknowns in life. This was also when I developed insomnia for the first time. It was only when I found the delicate balance of maintaining structure while leaving room for free-spirited adventures that my life transformed. By taking baby steps into the world of the unexpected, I was able to find delight in what transpired. I still plan many fun things for my life but leave so much room in my schedule as well.

Today I am the most relaxed and full of life that I have ever been. Countless beautiful experiences unfold in my everyday life. Many of these are experiences that I could never have dreamed of planning like discovering a beautiful waterfall, a random suggestion from a stranger on a beach in Hawaii leading me to the most amazing clam chowder in Bodega Bay, California or the countless amount of foods I have eaten at places found while wandering around a city. I'm nowhere near perfect but I've learned to embrace that and enjoy life anyways. Especially the messy parts because sometimes they are the most fun.

It's time to reclaim yourself and pursue the joy that life has to offer. You have the power to love your life fully. Embracing spontaneity can be the key to unlocking a world of unexpected adventures and personal growth. This ebook is here to guide you in leveraging the power of your organized planning mind while embracing the beauty of spontaneity.

In the pages that follow, you will learn the magic of planned spontaneity and how to create a balance that works best for you. By welcoming both planned and unplanned moments in your life, you'll embark on a journey of self-discovery, joy and newfound contentment. Let's delve into the world of harmonious living where you have the power to create a fulfilling and meaningful life.

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CHAPTER
1

THE BENEFITS OF
BOTH

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Let's explore the advantages of being a great planner and the allure of spontaneity. This section covers the remarkable advantages both facets offer so we can understand how they intertwine creating a tapestry of enriched experiences.

As a planner, you have experienced the benefits of planning like achieving goals you have set for yourself. Your organized approach allows you to set clear objectives and work efficiently, excelling at time management, prioritization, and personal achievement. Effective planning acts as your compass, steering you toward your desired destinations and helping you carve out a purposeful path. In your friend group, family or professional space, you are often looked upon as a pillar of structure, providing a sense of stability and control to those around you, offering a feeling of security. Planning empowers you to allocate resources wisely, ensuring you invest your time and energy into pursuits that truly matter. Planning allows you to break down big dreams into actionable steps, propelling you toward success with clarity and purpose.

On the other side of scheduling, spontaneity has its own set of gifts to offer. While planning provides the scaffolding of your life's journey, spontaneity injects it with vibrant bursts of color and unexpected twists. Embracing spontaneity fosters excitement and joy in moments that unfold naturally. It leads to unexpected adventures, the sheer joy of living in the present and the thrill of stepping outside your comfort zone. Embracing the unpredictability of life grants you a sense of freedom and liberation. Those unplanned experiences turn into memories that often carry a unique beauty which can only be found in spontaneity. By leaving room in your schedule for the unexpected, you add an element of surprise and excitement to your routine. This practice encourages you to step outside your comfort zone, promoting personal growth and resilience as you adapt and thrive in novel situations.

Imagine a ballet where each movement is carefully choreographed, yet interlaced with moments of breathtaking improvisation. Just as a dancer achieves grace through this delicate balance, your life finds its rhythm through the harmony of planning and spontaneity.

If we have planned everything on one end of the spectrum and fully unplanned on the other end, where do you currently fall? Take stock of your levels of planning and levels of spontaneity. Do this in a judgment free way towards yourself. Think about which direction you would like to shift and how you can make that happen.

Incorporating spontaneity does not mean negating the benefits of planning. Instead, it enhances your life's experiences, offering a harmonious balance between structure and serendipity. By seamlessly weaving planning and the unknown into your life, you craft a narrative that is uniquely yours. Each brushstroke of a well-planned goal complements the flourish of an unplanned escapade, creating a masterpiece that resonates with joy and growth. As we delve into the heart of this ebook, you will discover strategies and tips on how to strike that delicate balance, finding ways to embrace spontaneity while still cherishing the advantages of being a great planner. By welcoming both styles into your life, you can embark on a transformative journey towards life that is vibrant, purposeful and utterly extraordinary.

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CHAPTER
2

THE IMPACT

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While planning has its undeniable benefits, maintaining a highly structured and rigid schedule can gradually take a toll on your mental and emotional well-being. The pressure to “have it all” and be constantly put together, as imposed by societal expectations, often leads women to develop a habit of micromanaging every aspect of their lives to assert control. From the moment we step into early adulthood, societal pressures silently mold our behaviors and choices, often leading us down the path of rigid planning habits. However, this dangerous habit robs you of the ability to fully enjoy the present moment.

Social media makes it easier than ever to compare yourself to other people. A quick scroll through Instagram reveals that everyone seems to be juggling an ever-growing list of commitments and achievements. There’s an unspoken competition to outdo one another, perpetuating the myth that the more packed your schedule, the more successful and valuable you are. It’s a never ending cycle that leaves you feeling like you aren’t good enough.

This affects you in the workplace as well. Chronic stress and burnout frequently afflict those who are overly rigid in their planning. It is all too common for women to reach their goals in life then hit the exhaustion point. The term burnout was coined in the 1970s by Herbert Freudenberger defined as “the extinction of motivation or incentive, especially where one’s devotion to a cause or relationship fails to produce the desired results.” This phenomenon has only become more common in modern job environments.

The pressure to always have a plan, to be constantly in control, and to avoid any deviations from the set course becomes overwhelming. The relentless search for the next achievement can prevent you from savoring and celebrating your current successes, leading to a constant sense of discontent.

Excessive stress can lead to a weakened immune system, making you more susceptible to illnesses. Cardiovascular issues, digestive problems, and muscle tension are among the physical manifestations of chronic stress. Emotionally, stress can trigger anxiety, depression, irritability, and cognitive impairment, leaving you feeling overwhelmed and drained. This is not what you want for your life.

Finding a balance between planning and serendipity is crucial for a healthier and happier existence. Celebrating your current successes while pursuing future goals is essential for experiencing true fulfillment.

Consciously choosing to plan less opens up countless possibilities and creates breathing room in your life. Embracing the unknown can be daunting, but it positively impacts your overall well-being and enhances personal growth. Once you break free of the cycle of efficiencies caused by constant planning, you are able to enjoy the simple pleasure in life.

As we embark on this exploration of planned spontaneity, it's crucial to recognize the powerful grip of societal pressures and expectations. By understanding the roots of our planning habits and acknowledging the toll they can take on our well-being, we open up the door to liberation. We invite the possibility of reclaiming our lives from the clutches of overplanning and embracing the freedom of living in the present moment, unburdened by the weight of unattainable standards.

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THE FEARS

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Let's explore the common fears that hold planners back from embracing spontaneity including fear of the unknown, fear of failure, loss of control and the fear of wasting time. These all create mental barriers that prevent individuals from experiencing growth and joy. We will dive into each of these to help you overcome the fears and pave the way to a more open and fulfilling life.

The fear of the unknown is anything new that your brain doesn't have past precedence to reference. It is comfortable to stick to what you know because it is safe. You are used to expecting the outcome of everything you do so you tend to shy away from experiences that have unknown aspects. This cuts out so much opportunity in your life. Uncertainty can be a source of growth and excitement when you learn to embrace it, rather than fear it.

You can conquer this fear by embracing uncertainty. Start small. Begin by intentionally introducing controlled uncertainty into your daily routine. Choose minor decisions, like trying a new restaurant or taking a different route to work. Gradually build your comfort with the unfamiliar. Think about the worst thing that could happen with the risks you are taking and start to pursue the small ones with low consequences to build the muscle. When faced with a situation that triggers your fear of the unknown, take a moment to visualize positive outcomes imagining how the experience could lead to joy, personal development, or unexpected connections.

The fear of failure can keep you stuck in a certain routine and make you shy away from anything outside the set path you are on. The failure in your mind might stem from perfectionism or outside pressure of what others might think of you.

Take a look inward to redefine what really matters to you and what qualifies as a failure. Shift your mindset to define success as a journey of growth and learning rather than a destination to be reached. Celebrate progress and the smallest victories along your journey. By embracing the fear of failure and doing it anyway, you can build resilience and self-compassion. Mistakes and setbacks become stepping stones towards personal development enhancing your life more than never failing ever could.

The fear of losing control in any aspect of your life can coincide with the belief that spontaneity disrupts order and stability. Although logically this is true, there are so many aspects of your life that you cannot control no matter how hard you try. Learning how to be flexible and adaptable will help you navigate the uncontrollable challenges that life will bring you.

In order to cultivate flexibility, identify your control triggers. Pinpoint the areas where you struggle to relinquish control. Awareness is the first step. Work on your fear of losing control by gradually exposing yourself to safe situations where you can intentionally let go. Start with low-stakes scenarios and work your way up to more significant aspects of your life.

The fear of wasting time can make you devalue downtime for its lack of productivity. You might think that things outside your planned schedule are taking time away from the plans but the pursuit of your personal joy gives you more energy for the other areas of your life.

In order to combat this fear, shift your focus from solely productivity to overall well-being. Recognize that engaging in activities that bring you joy and fulfillment is not a waste of time but an investment in your happiness. Consider how embracing spontaneity and engaging in joyful activities replenishes your energy. Recognize that these moments of rejuvenation enhance your overall productivity and effectiveness.

By following these practical steps, you'll be equipped to navigate through fears that have constrained your spontaneity. Remember, each small triumph contributes to your journey of self-discovery. As you embrace these strategies, you'll transform barriers into bridges leading to a life enriched by structure and adventure.

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CONQUERING PERFECTIONISM

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One of the biggest things holding many planners back from a life full of joy is the perfectionism tendency. Wanting to always do things perfectly and the fear of not being able to will prevent you from even trying. In this section we will talk about embracing imperfection and letting go of the need for everything to go according to plan.

The mindset of perfectionism is often tied to very rigid planning. You want everything to be just right and anything outside the plan is feared as a disruption. The hardest part about this is how you will react when your plans do get off track. Your natural tendency will be towards tension and overwhelm.

In contrast, when you embrace imperfections you are able to reframe your perspective and see the detours as opportunities for growth and creativity. Breaking away from the pursuit of flawlessness in your schedule will also shift your mindset towards yourself and the feeling like you have to be perfect as a person. You can be messy and nuanced and fully yourself rather than trying to be what you think others want you to be.

Connected to perfectionism is the tendency of planners to overthink and overanalyze situations, leading to indecision and missed spontaneous opportunities. You may also have limiting beliefs or negative thoughts about yourself and your abilities.

In areas where you have decision fatigue or excessive analysis that leads to paralysis, it is important to embrace your intuition and gut instincts. There are many decisions taking up space in your mind that don't really matter in the long term. Train yourself to make these quickly and move on instead of obsessing.

Reframe negative thoughts by adding "yet" to the end. For example, when learning something new, you might catch yourself thinking "I can't do this perfectly" but adding "yet" opens up possibilities in your mind. "I am not good at playing pickleball...yet" shifts your focus from an endpoint to a journey of growth.

Cultivate an attitude of flexibility and adaptability in your daily life that carries into your long-term plans. Being open to change fosters resilience and reduces stress. This can be a very hard lesson for planners to learn but it is so important for your overall well-being. As much as you can try to control things, there is so much volatility and chaos in the world that learning to embrace the unexpected with ease is one of the most valuable lessons you will ever learn.

A practical way to embrace imperfection is to engage in an activity with the intention of making a mistake. Whether it is drawing a crooked line or intentionally using the wrong ingredient in a recipe, this exercise helps you become more comfortable with imperfection. You could also try gradually exposing yourself to situations where things don't go according to plan. Start with minor deviations, like intentionally taking a different route to work. As you become more accustomed to small changes, your tolerance for unexpected events will increase.

Shift your focus from solely achieving goals to appreciating each part of the journey along the way. This makes the whole process part of the fun rather than just the end goal. Focusing just on the finish line can lead to disappointment when you finally get there and it feels different than you thought it would. A little improvisation along the way will add richness and depth to the process of achieving your aspirations and appreciating the full journey.

Set realistic expectations for yourself with the 80% rule. You aren't in school anymore being graded. In many situations, achieving 100% perfection is unrealistic and unnecessary. Strive for 80% effort in certain tasks, freeing yourself from the burden of perfection. Really think about if the task is worth the extra 20% effort before stressing yourself out.

A huge part of conquering perfectionism is practicing self-compassion. Use the friend test to think about how you would respond to a friend if they made a mistake. Use that feeling to treat yourself with the same kindness and understanding you would offer a friend. Develop a repertoire of compassionate affirmations to combat any negative self-talk. When you fall short of perfection, have a go to mantra to tell yourself along the lines of "Each attempt is a victory, regardless of the outcome" or "I'm doing my best and learning every day. Even when I make a mistake, I'm growing from it."

By incorporating these practical techniques and mindset shifts, you'll gradually chip away at the grip of perfectionism. Remember the goal is progress, not perfection. Each step you take toward embracing imperfection and practicing self-compassion contributes to a more balanced and fulfilling life.

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MINDFULNESS

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Now let's explore the vital role of mindfulness in fully enjoying spontaneous experiences. By tapping into mindfulness, you enhance your capability to savor the present moment allowing for moments of heightened presence and joy. This mindset tool also applies to the planned part of your life and helps you slow down to enjoy things instead of always rushing to the next thing.

Jumping into spontaneous adventures can be intimidating so it is important to go in with an open heart and open mind. Allow each moment to unfold naturally as you release expectations and judgments towards yourself and towards the situation. This open-hearted approach fosters a deeper connection with yourself and others in your spontaneous encounters.

Mindfulness is defined as a mental state achieved by focusing your awareness on the present moment, while calmly accepting your feelings, thoughts and bodily sensations. This practice enables you to cultivate a heightened awareness of your surroundings, emotions and sensations.

One mindfulness technique is to notice all of your senses. Allow yourself to fully engage with your surroundings reveling in the sights, sounds, smells, tastes and textures of the present moment. This awareness deepens the appreciation for the instant and helps your body remember the beauty of the moment. Within your experiences, you can maximize the richness and impact of the moment by paying attention to all of the details - how you feel within your body, the colors you are seeing in your surroundings, and the emotions coming up for you.

Imagine this scenario: you're strolling through a quaint street market during your travels, and you stumble upon a lively local festival. Mindfulness encourages you to immerse yourself in the present, to absorb the vibrant melodies, the beauty of the colors and the joyful laughter of the crowd. By being attuned to your senses, you're not merely observing the scene - you're living it, relishing every unscripted moment.

Use your breath as an anchor to remain present and engaged during unexpected moments. If you start to get stressed or overwhelmed in uncharted territory, mindful breathing can help relieve tension and anxiety while fostering a calm and open state of mind. One breathing exercise is the 4x4 method where you breathe in for four seconds, hold for four seconds, breath out for four seconds, hold for four seconds and repeat. This makes your mind focus on your breath and helps calm your mind. It also anchors you in the here and now.

Focusing on the beauty of the moment allows you to appreciate it. Doing this within unplanned forays feels magical because the whole thing is unexpected. Mindfulness is a helpful tool in reducing anxiety so you are able to navigate the uncertainties that come along with spontaneity with greater ease. As you cultivate a nonjudgmental and accepting attitude toward your thoughts and experiences, you will learn to release any reservations and immerse yourself fully in the experience.

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CREATIVITY &
INNOVATION

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There is a powerful link between spontaneity and creativity. Let's explore how free-spirited moments can ignite innovative thinking. As you add whimsy into your life it will become a catalyst for creativity, enabling you to unlock your creative potential and explore new interests and passions you might not have considered before.

Uninhibited behaviors spark creativity by opening your mind to fresh ideas and unique perspectives. Your mind doesn't necessarily like to go outside of what it knows and your brain molds your life to fit into your beliefs, not the other way around. Unscripted experiences can help you break free from conventional thinking, inspiring innovation and problem solving. When you expand your experiences, your mind automatically expands with the new information.

Curiosity is a gateway to creativity because it pushes us to grow and learn. Being open to new experiences and exploring uncharted territories allows you to cultivate a spirit of curiosity. Ask questions of people so you can learn from their stories. Curiosity leads to the discovery of untapped interests and passions that can spark creative endeavors. Unplanned experiences can help break your creative blocks and revitalize artistic expression. You can find inspiration in the unknown by expanding the realm of possibility. A random class you take has the potential to become a fun hobby.

Stepping outside your comfort zone can help you embrace unconventional pathways in your creative pursuits. Unpredictable moments can lead to discovering new talents and passions that have remained undiscovered. There are countless ways to tap into your creative talents and to discover your potential. Allow yourself to try things that you might not be good at and overcome self-doubt by going for it anyway. Embrace the notion that you are an inherently creative being and explore what that uniquely means for you.

Have fun with it. Introduce an attitude of playfulness in your creative pursuits. Think about the activities that brought you joy when you were a kid and see how it feels to do those same activities now. Approaching creativity with a playful spirit enhances the flow of ideas and boosts enthusiasm for your journey. Allow your passions and random interests to lead the way in your go with the flow endeavors

Seek out collaboration with other people and learn from diverse perspectives. When you seek inspiration from others you can engage in creative exchanges and grow together. Sometimes working with others can lead to groundbreaking results that could never happen by yourself. Use some creativity techniques to spark innovative thinking including brainstorming, mind mapping, journaling and role-playing.

Brainstorming invites you to set your thoughts free, allowing them to cascade and collide, igniting new connections and innovative solutions. This is effective with a group of friends or colleagues and solo. Whether you're facing a personal problem, planning a social event, or simply seeking inspiration, the act of brainstorming can turn a seemingly ordinary situation into a wellspring of ideas.

Mind mapping is a visual tool that lets you explore the landscape of your ideas, connecting concepts and fostering innovative patterns. Start with a central idea then connect all the related concepts to create the mind map. This technique invites you to venture beyond the confines of linear thinking.

Journaling is a practice that can be used to ignite your creative thinking. Write whatever flows from your mind or use prompts to have a starting point for our writing.

With role playing, you imagine stepping into the shoes of someone else to tap into their perspective. This allows you to see situations from different angles and uncover novel situations. Embrace the role of a different character, profession, or mindset, and let the fresh perspective guide you toward innovative insights that would have otherwise remain unhidden.

Embracing spontaneity becomes a gateway to finding new interests, passions and creative pathways. In your personal journey, encourage yourself to nurture a creative mindset that embraces play, fun, and the joy of experimentation. By exploring new avenues and collaborating with diverse perspectives, you can foster innovative thinking and enriched creative expressions. Ultimately, embracing your own creativity leads to a world of endless inspiration and artistic growth. Embrace the fusion of spontaneity and creativity and watch as your world transforms into a masterpiece of innovation and wonder.

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CHAPTER

FINDING THE BALANCE

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Embracing both planning and spontaneity allows for a more enriched and fulfilling life. In this section we will explore the art of finding harmony between structured routines and unplanned adventures. This balance has the power to change your life. You will become more adaptable and resilient while embracing life's ebbs and flows.

To find the areas that must be planned vs. some that are more flexible, you will need to set clear priorities in your life. It is important to keep track of your short and long term goals and make decisions based on those. Start to eliminate the noise of activities that are not providing value in your life, moving you towards your goals, or giving you some other positive outcome.

Once you start finding this balance you can stop planning everything and consciously allocate free time into your daily and weekly schedule. By eliminating unimportant tasks you create space for fun. This allows for you to become open to spontaneous invitations and opportunities without feeling overwhelmed. Those unexpected moments of spontaneity can be the most magical moments of your life.

The "Yes, And" mindset is used within improvisation comedy techniques and can be a helpful tool for you to be more spontaneous. Within comedy this technique encourages performers to go with the flow of the other performers, work with the material that has been laid out and add a unique twist on the situation to connect with the audience. Say "yes" to experiences that align with your passions and interests so you can explore how these opportunities can enrich your life.

You don't have to say yes to everything! It is important to learn the power of saying no and setting boundaries. Only move forward with invitations that help you grow and align with your personal well-being and values. This helps you preserve your energy for what truly matters and cuts out the noise. Be selective with your commitments for higher quality outcomes. Saying no authentically communicates your availability and capacity. When you are intentional with your "yes" and your "no" you can live in full alignment of your best self.

A great technique for balancing your schedule with structure and flexibility is time boxing. Assign an allotted time within your day for everything you need to do, including intervals of nothingness and time for exploring passion areas. This gives you a limit for the things you have to do (that you might be procrastinating) so that you can get them done efficiently and move on to more fun things.

By understanding the significance of balance, effective planning, and the openness to spontaneity, you can experience the richness of a harmonious existence. You won't dramatically change overnight but you can take baby steps towards a rich life filled with fulfillment, growth and endless possibilities. Be patient with yourself as you open up to new experiences and step outside your comfort zone. You will find surprising discoveries and learn more about yourself, sometimes by finding out what you don't like.

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CHAPTER

JUMP IN

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Now that we have talked about all of the possibilities that spontaneity brings, it is time to dip your toes in the water. Once you start implementing the techniques discussed in this ebook, you will gain the confidence to fully jump into the deep end.

In order to open up to spontaneity, you will need to shift your mindset from a place of fear to a place of wonder. Think about all the things that you plan and think about the worst case scenario if you don't plan those things. Pick the ones that have the most approachable worst case scenario and start with those. Ease your way into bigger risks that have potential to pay off beyond your wildest dreams.

Reflect on your current life. Think about how you want to feel in 5-10 years in comparison to how you feel now. Imagine what you would feel like if you kept doing what you have been doing and didn't make any changes. Identify areas you want to change and the motivation behind wanting to make the change. Is it to rediscover joy, explore new experiences, or foster personal growth? Break it down into pieces of how to become that future version of you. Take intentional steps towards achieving that transformation. You don't have to make dramatic shifts to start to feel the benefits.

One thing that holds planners back is not knowing all the details of a situation. This discomfort makes them hesitant to say yes to an invitation. An example of this is parking - some people won't do something if they don't know where to park but the worst case scenario is usually having to pay to park or having to park a bit further away and walk. Challenge yourself to lean into the discomfort. Once you show yourself you can handle the consequences you will start feeling more comfortable with the unknown. Start with low-risk activities and do them. Document your experience before, during, and after. Use this as evidence that fears can be overcome and that embracing the unknown can be rewarding.

Counteract your fears with realistic positive versions of the thoughts in your head. Think about all the things that could go right and how you could succeed at whatever you are trying. Think about the growth you can experience by going outside your comfort zone and expanding your horizons. Think about the feeling of freedom you will get when you start releasing some control. Instead of wasting time, how would it feel to recharge your batteries and let yourself relax?

Take a few minutes to visualize what it would look like for you to embrace spontaneity with confidence and ease. What kind of emotions does that bring up for you? What does it feel like in your body? Picture a relaxed version of your future self.

Gradually integrate spontaneity into your routine. Set aside designated times or days for unstructured activities. Begin with short periods and work your way up to longer durations. Use this carved out time to engage in creative activity, explore your surroundings, or say “yes” to unplanned invitations.

Follow your curiosity by asking questions and seeking new perspectives. Approach each day with the intention to discover something new, whether it is a fun fact, new skill or a new recipe. Keep a curiosity journal to jot down your insights and discoveries.

Acknowledge and celebrate each spontaneous experience, regardless of the outcome. Capture these moments in a journal or photo album. Reflect on how each experience made you feel, what you learned, and how it contributed to your overall well-being. Regularly assess your progress and reflect on how embracing spontaneity has impacted your life. Notice any shifts in your mindset, well-being and overall satisfaction. Adjust your approach based on your experiences, refining your strategies and techniques as you continue to grow.

By breaking down the journey into actionable steps, you’ll pave the way for a smoother transition from rigid planning to embracing the whimsical. Remember that each step is a valuable part of your transformation, and as you gradually integrate these practices into your life, you’ll discover a newfound sense of joy, fulfillment, and limitless possibility.

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CHAPTER

THE FUN PART

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This is the fun part where you will learn practical ways to add spontaneity into your life. These will range from baby steps to big leaps along the spectrum of fully planned and fully spontaneous. You don't have to abandon your planning tools completely. Instead, start by gradually letting go of excessive control. Try these methods in your normal life as well as your vacation time. Adding some structure into your spontaneity will allow you to step into it at a pace that is comfortable for you.

Unplanned time blocks

If you don't have space in your schedule for free days or weekends, start with an afternoon, a weeknight or a weekend morning. Leave things open without planning anything for allotted times and then fill the time however you feel in the moment when it arrives. This also allows you to say yes to last minute invitations for someone else to plan something with you.

Fun bursts

Take 10-15 minutes of your day to do something fun in a small way. Many people live very busy lives but you can find 10-15 minutes. Do something silly with your partner or kids. Pick a color and see how many things around you are that color along the lines of the I Spy game. Soak in the different types of plants on a walk around your neighborhood. Get creative with this one.

Ask for recommendations

This is especially fun on vacations or work trips when you can get recommendations from locals on the cool places to go. You can ask about things to do, places to eat, fun nearby experiences or any area of interest. After receiving the recommendations, follow through on trying some of them that align with what sounds fun for you.

Flip a coin method

If you are deciding between two things, use a coin to choose for you. You could choose between two good options for your night like staying in for face masks or going out for a pedicure. You can also do this with a walk around your neighborhood where you do heads for right, tails for left and see where it takes you.

Say yes

Open your heart and mind to new experiences and say yes to experiences outside your norm. You never know what kind of adventures you will find or who you could meet when you start saying yes to opportunities. Trust that you will find something good in the process of trying something you have never done before. This could either be new to you with a friend doing something they know they enjoy or you both try the new thing together. Both have positive benefits and can be fun.

Microadventures

This is the concept of infusing small, cheap, local adventures into your life. Explore the area around you. Take the ideas of things you would normally do on vacation and do them in a smaller way closer to home. This could include hiking, backyard camping, stargazing or a night at a nearby boutique hotel. You don't have to take a week off from work to experience the magic of adventuring.

Let other people plan

Roll with it and let yourself relax. See what happens when you don't plan and how it makes you feel. In a relationship or within your friend group, you can specifically ask someone else to come up with the plans for date night, girls night or your next trip. Give up control and go with the flow. Enjoy the feeling of doing fun things without having to be the person in charge.

Create a fun list

This could be a general list of things you want to try or a seasonal list that you aim to complete within a specific time period, like a Summer Bucket List. Whichever method you like best is fine. You can make it on physical paper or create a digital version. Create different lists and use multiple methods. A few ideas of topics where this can be helpful with decision fatigue can be new recipes, classes to take, museums/attractions to visit, day trips, weekend trips, places around the world to visit, date night adventures, and restaurants.

Random selection

This is connected to the list idea but more along the lines of how to decide what to do. Create a jar of ideas of things you want to try and pick one out when you are ready for your adventure. You could wrap up all the books you want to read and then unwrap one every time you finish the previous one. You can create a numbered list in a spreadsheet then use a random number generator to pick for you.

Follow the deals

Instead of picking a travel location and dates, put on flight alerts for all the places you want to go and book the trip when flights are cheapest. Most airlines have seasonal sales so you can compare the sale options from your city with your travel wish list and book it! This also works for offseason activities or off-time specials. Save money trying new restaurants at lunch or happy hour. Take advantage of discounts on activities by finding coupons and signing up for benefit programs. Become a member of museums you enjoy and use the perks. Use free trials and new member discounts for programs you are interested in trying.

Start traditions

Come up with something you like and then find ways to make it different each time. This could be using ABCs for date nights or adventures. Start with A and come up with something for that letter then the next time move on to B and keep going throughout the alphabet. You can do this with dinner like Meatloaf Monday and Taco Tuesday where you have the general theme but can change it up each week. You can use different proteins, flavor profiles and side combinations to make it interesting. Designate one day per month as Local Tourist Day where you pick a place in your area where you have never visited before. Treat it like a tourist destination, exploring and learning something new about your own community.

Take the long route

Go down streets you have never seen before on a walk or on your way home from work. Stop at scenic lookouts on a road trip or make pit stops in random towns. Cultivate a spirit of wonder and curiosity for the world around you by breaking up your routine. Enjoy the journey and unexpected twists and turns.

Pay attention

In a fast paced life full of distractions where your attention is being pulled in a million directions, there is nothing more beautiful than being fully present in the moment. Set aside “unplugged” time in your day where you don’t have any screens around you and focus on the world around you. Really connect with the people you are with rather than looking at your phone. Savor those tiny beautiful moments you find when you slow down to see them.

Barebones Vacation Planning

For an upcoming vacation, challenge yourself to plan as little as possible. Only book the necessary logistics like flights and accommodations. From there, wing it and see what happens. Wander to find restaurants once you get there. Ask locals for recommendations and find the random events happening around your vacation spot.

Use any combination you like of these suggested tips. Be kind to yourself on your journey. Come up with your own ways to be playful in your approach towards spontaneity.



C O N C L U S I O N

YOU GOT THIS!

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Congratulations, you've just embarked on a journey that has the power to transform your life into a tapestry of joy, fulfillment, and endless possibilities. The pages you've explored in this ebook are not mere words; they are your guide to unlocking the magic of embracing spontaneity and weaving it harmoniously into the fabric of your daily existence.

Now, it's time to take action. Imagine a life where you wake up each day excited for the unexpected, where every moment is a canvas waiting for your creative brushstrokes. Envision yourself conquering fears, embracing imperfection, and dancing freely in the serendipitous rhythm of life. Picture a version of you that radiates resilience, adaptability, and a deep sense of contentment.

The path to this life begins with a single step - your step. Your journey might start small with a few moments of planned spontaneity scattered throughout your week. Or perhaps you're ready to dive headfirst into uncharted territories, saying "yes" to new experiences and opening your heart to the beauty of the unknown. Whatever pace you choose, know that every step forward is a step toward a life that is richer, more vibrant, and more meaningful.

As you close this ebook, remember that you have the power to shape your reality. Embrace the practices, techniques and insights you've gained, and watch as your life blossoms into an exquisite masterpiece. The adventure is yours to create, the joy is yours to experience, and the fulfillment is yours to claim.

So, don't wait another moment. Seize the opportunity that lies before you. Embrace spontaneity, cultivate balance, and let the beauty of the unexpected weave its magic into every corner of your life. Your journey starts now, and it's going to be extraordinary. Are you ready?! Let's embark on this adventure together.



THANKS FOR READING

LET'S KEEP THE PARTY GOING

Work with me!

Coaching - I offer personalized packages to work on your goals and desires ranging from one month to a year.

Postcard Fun Experience - six weeks of postcards with ideas of fun things to try with different themes each week.

Follow @vibrantbadass on Instagram

Sign up for the Vibrant Badass weekly newsletter - Fun Friday Five - which includes five ways to elevate your life with varying themes. Sign up on the website or by sending me an email or DM.

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