

Chapter Two

THE SECOND SACRED RESPONSIBILITY: RISE AND SHINE

Stepping onto a brand-new path is difficult, but not more difficult than remaining in a situation which is not nurturing to the whole woman.

—Maya Angelou

I have exciting news for you! Shining into our greatness is a by-product of Self-Care. Yep! We have already begun to expose more of our light when our self-care practices begin to build our foundation of a healthy body, healthy mind and healthy heart. When we are feeling even just ten percent happier, healthier and livelier we are simply more vibrant, shinier!

We start by showing up in our life *choosing* to shine. We actually have the capability to move our lives in so many directions, and Rise and Shine as the second Sacred Responsibility tells us to do just that, to lean into our lives, be fully present, participate like it is the best day of your life. And, yes, even when we are challenged, finding the strength to rise up. We rise and shine for ourselves first because we are worthy of a life well-lived, and second because there is always someone watching us as their mentoring example of how a life well lived can look. There is always someone learning from observing us and noticing how we manage ourselves in our day to day lives. Usually, we are not even aware of who that person is. May we inspire those who are observing us by being our most authentic selves and encourage them by example to be their most authentic selves also.

Choose to Rise and Shine

Rise and Shine, ladies, because we are making history for ourselves right now! Each one of us in this moment. Here, Now, and Together. We are in a position to write the story of an entire adult life for ourselves, to write the story of our lives that will leave the greatest impact on our families, in our communities and in our overall story. I believe that with every thought, word, and action we make during this Third Act Movement, we are leaving a gorgeous imprint of light for future women to warm themselves in and inspire them to accept the torch from us when we enter our fourth act—the next book!

Although history is of the past, it is not created in the past, it is created in the present moment. The wisdom of the Dalai Lama reminds us that:

There are only two days in the year that nothing can be done, one is called yesterday, and the other is called tomorrow. So today is the right day to love, believe, do, and mostly live.

And, may I add, take Sacred Responsibility

As we begin accepting the Sacred Responsibility to Rise and Shine in our lives, we are taking full responsibility for the legacy we will leave once we depart from this life. When we Rise and Shine in

our lives each day, we no longer see ourselves as simply products of our past, but pioneering souls of our future. Once we embrace the mindset that every thought, word, and action create the imprint we leave behind, we realize that how we contribute to the story of our own legacy is completely up to us! The imprint and story we leave is created by our choices and by the decisions we make in the present moment: the choice to Rise and Shine, to show up every day in our lives like we matter and that our happiness matters, our vitality matters and our relationships matter. The present moment is like the fertile soil we plant our legacy seeds in. When nurtured by taking sacred responsibility to Rise and Shine, these creative seeds can grow into our rich story of a woman in her third act, who lived a life understanding that it is a Sacred Responsibility to Rise and Shine, to choose to create meaning and to locate inspiration each day. *Your* first chapter begins now!

Igniting Our Passion

We now ignite our passion to *consciously* Rise and Shine writing our new story with every thought, word and action. We are the Writers, Directors and Producers of our own play, our own plan, and our own legacy.

Our legacy is in the making with or without our conscious participation. Moments in time will continue to unfold and how we choose to be present within this unfolding is completely up to us. We have the idea of being the writers of our third act story and we have a starting point as we are here together in this present moment. But now what? Where to go from here? What will the future fiery and fabulous women in their third act be reading about us and which of our stories will they tell?

First: We get all fired up about it! Get turned on about it! We ignite the sacred fire of passion in our hearts. We get ourselves into a state of coherence.

Second: We ask ourselves the three questions of a Sacred Woman who takes Sacred Responsibility to Rise and Shine in her life and thus in her legacy.

Are my thoughts, words and actions in alignment with my third act story?

Are my thoughts, words and actions in alignment with my legacy?

Are my thoughts, words and actions in alignment with my happiness?

If you answer yes to any of these questions you are honouring the Second Sacred Responsibility Rise and Shine.

Relationships

One of the most satisfying places to Rise and Shine is in our relationships. All of them. Your intimate relationships, your family relationships, your friendships, the relationships you have with the natural world and your relationship with yourself. When we live from a place of taking Sacred Responsibility to Rise and Shine in our relationships we get to ask ourselves new questions, and feel free to add more to our list.

Do my thoughts, words, and actions contribute to an elevated and shiny relationship?

- Do my thoughts, words, and actions contribute to kindness in this relationship?
- Do my thoughts, words, and actions contribute to respect in this relationship?
- Do my thoughts, words, and actions contribute to understanding in this relationship?
- Do my thoughts, words, and actions contribute to happiness in this relationship?
- Do my thoughts, words, and actions contribute to healthy boundaries in this relationship?

These questions are to inspire you to be active in the way you relate to others. It is particularly important to be inspired in our intimate relationships, our relationships with our partners, our family members and our nearest and dearest friends. It is our plan to thrive in our third act, and we are setting the stage by taking Sacred Responsibility for the quality of our relationships. And yes, many times it will be us that makes the first move in this area because we are inspired to include healthy, happy relationships in our life well-lived. It is absolutely our pleasure to lead in this area and be the change we want to see in our relationships.

Shiny, Elevated Relationships

We can all relate to the feelings we get when we spend time with someone we really enjoy. The conversations and activities are so interesting, uplifting, and fun that the time just seems to fly. We are at a time in our lives that we can cultivate even deeper connections with the people in our lives who stoke our fire. We have a little more time and a lot more interest in experiencing our relationships from a place of sacred responsibility.

Go ahead, Rise and Shine here, become more understanding, become a deeper listener, become more open to the subtleties of those close to you who are making shifts and changes in their lives also. This is important, as we take sacred responsibility to write our new passionate life stories, as well as engage in our practices, we will create change in us that connects us more deeply to our ourselves and the way we wish to relate to our most intimate people. We will respond from a more interested and passionate place than we may have done in our past, and we also will know exactly how we want to spend our time and our efforts in our relationships now.

As we are developing these traits through taking sacred responsibility for our thoughts, words, and actions we will be changing our environment, both inner and outer. Our personal environment will shift. Others in our lives will feel and see we are coming from a refreshed perspective and, as we learn to “hold” the vibration of our practices in day to day life, it will give those we are in relationship with permission to do the same. Our commitment to our practice of taking the Sacred Responsibility to Rise and Shine will be the example set.

Rise and Shine: The Heart Centered Expression of You

There is a newer field of study called neurocardiology and these scientists are discovering that the heart is more functionally sophisticated than had been previously discussed in the scientific circles

over the last few hundred years (the ancients knew full well the power of the heart; we just took a bit of a nap in this area until recently).

Our practices of a mind, body, heart connection/balance provide a path towards what the HeartMath Institute teaches us is Coherence—a state of optimal functioning.

I am including the link to the full article on their site in the resources section as it is interesting and totally supportive of what we are setting out to accomplish for ourselves as we rise and shine. I have been fascinated by their research for years and if you have not heard of HeartMath yet, you are in for a treat!

HeartMath shares over twenty-five years of scientific research on the psychophysiology of stress, emotions, and the interactions between the heart and brain. There are over three hundred peer-reviewed or independent research studies published about the beneficial outcomes for us when we are in a state of coherence.

Not only do they have the years of research behind them, but they have developed technology to measure the frequencies we operate from and show them to us on a screen. We can watch our frequency change right before our eyes as we implement exercises that bring coherence into the mind, heart and body.

The practices of The Eight Sacred Responsibilities are our particular path to living from a state of coherence. I have put our practices to the test (repeatedly) on the HeartMath technology which I have in my office. My personal research has concluded that when we engage in the practices laid out for us in this book to work with, play with, and be supported by, we indeed will find ourselves in a state of Coherence. Cool eh!

Relating to the young adults in our lives

I have been thinking about this and would like to get the conversation flowing in our community. I have been hearing a lot of negative conversation directed at our Millennials, our young people born in the 80's and 90's. I have heard some serious conversations about an overall feeling of entitlement, that this generation lacks a work ethic and all kinds of less than loving chat about the people who will be our care-givers in our fourth act.

In my own experience, I have incredibly fun, strong, smart caring young people in my life and they have like-hearted friends. These are Millennials who happily enjoy being with older people and take responsibility for their share of the work around the home. They are innovative, interesting, respect nature and I could go on.

So, I am not honestly 100% tuned into the harsher conversations this generation seems to have directed their way. But I understand it is a great concern to many who are having this Millennial experience, so I would like our community to support those with this concern in their hearts.

As I have been thinking about the movement of disappointment in the Millennials it prompted the question: what if it is our work in the realms of Sacred Responsibility that sets just the kind of example it takes to turn these concerns around?

As we take Sacred Responsibility for ourselves, we will do less blaming and shaming and more inspiring and encouraging. By developing our responsibility for our own happiness and our ability to enjoy life and relationships fully, our young people will be mentored by us. Like all of our relationships,

whether they be our intimate relationships with our partners, or those with our children and grandchildren or the relationships with our closest friends, we are the ones stepping into Sacred Responsibility. It is our pleasure to make the first move.

Trust that with beautiful, respectful mentorship our younger generations will Rise and Shine and be greater than we could have guessed! May we lead by shiny example.

Our Second Sacred Practice

Our Daily Statement

Today I open myself fully to living a sacred life, I call in now the people, places and things that lift me up, light me up and hold me up as the accountable, responsible and authentic woman I am here to be. And so it is.

The Rise and Shine Imagination Practice (Imagining/Thoughts)

As we begin to look forward to Rising and Shining in our third act, we use all the superpowers we have in our imagination and we start to set our intention each day of what we want to present to the world. So, we send a Sacred Package forward to the end of our day with this intention.

Start by making a conscious decision about how you want to show up today and what you want to show to the world, to your family, friends, and to your community. Now prepare to send your package forward.

TIP: *This is something you could write in your journal daily.*

Once you have decided how you want to present yourself today, imagine now you send an energetic package or template of that ahead to the end of your day. Stay with me here, this is a powerful exercise in self-actualization and we are going to understand it slowly and together.

Let me give you a couple of examples of how I use the Sacred Package. I do this shortly after waking up, either in bed or as I am brushing my teeth, but within the first half hour to hour of waking up.

I think happily of how I would like to present myself today, what I would like to show to the world as I move around in my day. Today, as I think of all the possibilities, I decide I would like to show the part of me that is a deep listener. Today I will talk a little less and enjoy heart-centred listening with the people I come across during my day. I want anyone I connect with today to know that part of me. I want people to feel that they have been heard by me. This could be in person, on the phone or any of the ways we communicate like email or texting, etc. But today I show up as a deep listener.

Then I send that energy in my Sacred Package ahead of me to the end of my day as if it has already happened. Now I just get to enjoy the journey of my day and I'll join up with the package tonight when I go to bed.

I also send Sacred Packages forward when I travel. For example, as soon as the plane ticket is bought, or the plan made to travel somewhere, I begin to visualize my return. I send a Sacred Package forward in thoughts and visualization. I see myself arriving back home, happy and excited to tell my travel stories. I picture myself coming into my apartment after my journey, putting my feet up, scrolling through my photos, snuggling my cat and feeling amazing about my adventure. I send it forward that the experience concludes with me happy, healthy and safe.

Now bring to your mind what aspects of yourself you would love to present today.

Give yourself a few moments to visualize and feel these aspects of yourself in action today.

Take your time, visualize for as long as you like.

And when you feel like you've really got it, go ahead and imagine now that the energy of how you want to show up and what aspects of yourself you would like to share with the world today get packaged up into a beautiful Sacred Package.

Imagine sending that package forward to the end of your day.

See the package land in your bed on your pillow where you will meet up with it later. You can even use your hands and physically place your imagined Sacred Package on your pillow.

Your package may look like a gift, it may look like a sparkly paper airplane, it may look like you have thrown a golden baseball forward to the end of your day.

Use your imagination and make your Sacred Package fabulous.

Now go about your day knowing that it is so.

Once you send out your completed Sacred Package, say to yourself 'and so it is'. Then go about your day happily. This is meant to be fun, and to begin to get us tuned into exactly how we want to show up for ourselves and others and begin to see it as a done deal. We are dreaming into reality the full expression of our fiery and fabulous selves. Conceive it, believe it, achieve it.

Rise and Shine for the difficult day

We use our imagination practices for empowered playful thoughts that turn into our empowered and playful words that turn into our empowered and playful actions. All in support of increasing our life force and to assist us in building new neuro pathways. There will be some days that you would rather bury yourself under the covers than Rise and Shine, this is part of the tapestry of our lives and, sisters, we've got this. In our self-respecting acts of compassion, we have an imagination practice for the painful days.

There is an audio recording of this exercise to support you, so you can relax deeply into this healing visualization. Enter the Sacred Portal for our recordings at www.reachyogalifestyle.ca

Make yourself comfortable, sitting or lying down.

Connect to the feeling you have now that is holding you back from Rising and Shining today.

You may be in pain over loss, you may feel deep disappointment, or it's anger or shame.

Whatever it is that is your overwhelming feeling right now, just go into it, feel it, sit with it and breathe. Breathe deeply in and out of your nose. Take your time, you are not alone.

Begin to imagine that you see yourself as a child.

Notice what age you are in your imagination.

Imagine you see yourself as a little girl in a playground.

Notice the slides and swing sets, notice the weather and the sounds.

Imagine, as you see yourself as a little girl, that you can tell that she is in pain.

Observe her for a few breaths, notice what she is wearing, what kind of shoes she has on, what her hair looks like. Simply observe you as a little girl.

You get up from your observation bench and start to walk towards her.

You see she is alone, and she is not playing with the other children.

As you walk towards her, you can feel so much love filling your heart for her dear sweet soul who is in so much pain.

As you get closer, she sees you walking towards her and she recognizes you immediately and you see in her face that she is relieved you have shown up for her today.

When you reach her, kneel so you can be at her level and take her hand.

Take a few deep breaths. Take your time, let her cry if she needs to cry.

Imagine she lets you hug her, wrap your arms around her and let her feel that you are here for her, that you are not going to leave her.

Breathe and take all the time here you like.

Ask her if she would like to tell you what is hurting her so much today.

Now listen, listen until she feels completely heard, heard by your adult-self.

Breathe with her and listen.

When she is finished telling you about her pain, ask her if there is anything she would like you to do for her.

Listen to what she needs from you and give that to her.

If she needs you to hear her pain, be a deep listener for her.

If she needs you to protect her, do so with all your heart.

If she needs you to tell her she is safe, go ahead and tell her.

Imagine your adult-self helping your little girl feel anything she needs to feel safe, heard, and protected by you right now.

Tell her that you will always be here for her. Tell her that you will never leave her and that she can count on you always.

Now imagine taking what you just told her and wrapping it up in a Sacred Package. Your words and your feelings wrapped up into a beautiful Sacred Package. Make it as pretty and as fun as you know she would love.

Now give her the Sacred Package. Let her know she can unwrap it anytime she needs to feel or hear the words you have spoken to her today. The package can be opened millions of times, as it never loses any of its power.

Imagine that you wipe the tears from her cheeks, and you both stand up and you take her hand and begin to walk together.

Imagine as you walk and talk, that with each step you see her begin to become a playful child again.

You can see her light shining from her eyes again and her smile and you know she feels heard by you and safe to start her day from this point.

Use this imagination practice anytime you need, sisters. Feel supported by all of us reading this book. Feel the strength of your adult-self standing up strongly for the little girl inside of you. The little girl inside each of us is incredibly wise, incredibly resilient, and full of creativity and play. Let your adult-self stand beside her as a wise guardian. Take care of her as you would any child, anyone vulnerable, anyone in pain.

The Rise and Shine Breathing Practice (Breathing/Words)

Our Practice is to anchor Rise and Shine as a Sacred Responsibility into our body and our energy field. This practice of fully conscious breathing is just like we began our journey, breathing from the four parts of our breath. Inhale, Retain, Exhale, and Pause. In our Rise and Shine Power Breath we add energy to this breathing pattern.

This Power Breath has three inhales through the nose and out through the nose.

Then three in through the nose and out through the *mouth*.

We would say 3 nose-nose and 3 nose-mouth.

Continue to breathe in the same pattern as you have been in the Magical Moment breath, inhale, retain, exhale, and pause. But now we exaggerate the inhale and exhale.

Tip: Blow your nose before beginning this exercise.

Our inhale is a big sniff (yes, there is sound) and our exhale out the nose is equally as strong. Big sniff inhale, retain, big sniff out exhale.

We do not need to rush it, make it smooth and even, but a powerful sniff in and a sniff out.

On the exhale, you can slightly constrict the muscles in your throat and push the air out by squeezing your belly muscles at the same time as your exhale.

There will be sound when you inhale with your big sniff in, and sound on your exhale when you press out all of the air.

Three breaths nose-nose. In through the nose and out through the nose.

Now, three breaths nose-mouth.

Take a big sniff in through the nose and exhale through the mouth make a round shape with your mouth as if you were saying Ho.

Big sniff in through the nose, big Ho out through the mouth.

Do three of each to start.

Work your way up to three sets of three over a few weeks. Remember we have all kinds of time, a full adult life of time to work our way up to three sets of three.

Even though this is a power breath it is still long and luxurious.

Full breaths, deep breaths and take your time on your exhale, gently squeezing out all the air with a squeeze to your third chakra, the solar plexus area between your bellybutton and your lower breastbone.

This is the first exercise in our practice that starts to build the strength of the solar plexus, preparing us to be strong, ready and resilient for whatever may come along that tries to take away our personal power.

This is a deep cleansing breathing practice that in yoga is given in a more advanced setting. I know it seems simple, but I am going to strongly suggest if you are new to breathing exercises that you work with this one in a seated position until you become comfortable with your body's response.

This power breathing exercise helps to strengthen your lungs, energize you and settle you, strong and peaceful.

The Rise and Shine Physical Practice (Physical/Actions)

We continue to work with the strength of the solar plexus, third chakra and the power residing in the abdomen. We are cultivating strength from the core out. As we build our strength and coordination this movement will strengthen us from our feet to our solar plexus as well as build upper body strength. Here are a few options depending on your level of energy and strength:

Level One: We use the exhale as our engine to run this exercise, it will be our power centre. To begin you can be seated, standing, or laying down. Start by taking a full belly breath on your inhale, then as you exhale squeeze your belly button towards your spine. Again, inhale full belly and exhale squeezing your belly button towards your spine, inhale full belly breath, exhale squeezing your belly button towards your spine.

Continue breathing this way for about a minute starting to strengthen the centre or the core of your body. You can even begin to engage all the muscles from your pubic bone to your sternum, activating all the muscles that support your spine and the strength of your abdomen. If your energy levels are low today this can be the complete exercise. Continue breathing full belly and work on squeezing all the muscles of your abdomen toward your spine.

Level Two: Assume a seated or standing position and continue with the same breathing in, full belly, but this time as you inhale raise your arms. As you exhale, make slightly squeezed fists and pull your elbows down towards your rib cage as you squeeze your belly.

Inhale and raise your arms. As you exhale, make slightly squeezed fists and pull your elbows down towards your rib cage as you squeeze your belly. Squeeze your underarm muscles when you bring your elbows close to your ribcage.

Continue for one full minute and on your last exhale lay your hands over your heart, close your eyes, and breathe.

Level Three. Start from a standing position, feet a comfortable hip width apart (your feet are as wide as you need so that your knees feel strong and protected from the stress of too much pressure).

Inhale and raise your arms. As you exhale, make slightly squeezed fists and pull your elbows towards your rib cage as you squeeze your belly and bend into your knees slightly or deeply whatever is good for you today.

From your squat position, press strongly into your feet, inhale come up and reach up. Exhale, make small fists and pull your elbows towards your ribs and sink into your squat again.

Level Four. On the days you feel high energy and strength, we add on a holding position. Feet are a comfortable hip-width apart. Inhale and raise your arms. As you exhale, make slightly squeezed fists and pull your elbows towards your rib cage as you squeeze your belly and bend into your knees deeply and comfortably.

Do this sequence three times.

On the third time, hold in your squat.

You can go ahead and extend your arms out in front or slightly above.

Hold for three deep breaths.

On your third exhale, bring your elbows back to your ribs, hands to your heart and inhale.

Then use the power of your exhale to press yourself up to standing. Hands over your heart, relax and breathe.

Tip: *Be mindful of your knees.*

Yes, we are building strength and endurance and we are also cultivating alignment. If your knees feel any pain, stop, take a break and readjust. You can even begin by using something supportive like a table or counter to hold onto just to find the best position for your knees.

Never force your movements during the practices, simply meet your body wherever it is at each time you do the exercises and you will see that it will change from day to day. As well, as you become stronger and more flexible you will notice changes.

I understand that for some of you when I say work your way up to 8 it will seem too basic since you are physically capable of doing many more and what a blessing you are so strong and flexible, sister. Go ahead and do as many as you love!

You are worthy, you are powerful, and you are strong.