



Thank you for helping make the JillFit #MindsetMonth campaign such a success! Your comments, shares and discussion participation around mindset have helped get these important empowerment messages out in a greater way! So THANK YOU!

Enclosed are all 31 posts from the month so that you can read them whenever you like 😊

Unfortunately in order to keep this document small enough to email, I did not include the graphics, only the written copy. But if you ever want to revisit the images, they are all at <http://instagram.com/jillfit> and search #MindsetMonth.

Love,
Jill

Day 1 #MindsetMonth:

Gratitude is a game-changer.

When I started on my mindset journey a few years ago, I was a total victim. Feeling as if things were happening *to* me, feeling bad for myself for my struggles and feeling like no one could possibly "get" me.

One of the very first tools my spiritual coach introduced me to, at that time, was gratitude training. Asking, "What, in this situation, can I find appreciation for?"

Gah! This was hard because I wanted to be petulant. I didn't want to find gratitude in what I perceived was a bad situation. It felt like condoning it, accepting it. I wanted to be stubborn and "done wrong." Playing the victim felt good, easier.

But over time, I learned that even in those tiny instances when I was able to tease out a single bright spot in a crappy situation, it indeed made all the difference. I was able to feel back in my power, like I had something to look toward. I began to feel better about my circumstances, empowered to change it.

Getting started: I began by simply keeping a gratitude journal next to my bed and before bed every night, I would write one single thing I was grateful for that day. Sometimes it was easy, and other times I literally wrote, "I'm grateful to have experienced this shitty situation." Ha!

But honestly. It's a practice, and the more you do it, the easier it gets until you wake up 3 months later with a completely different M.O. Try it. Let me know how you do!

Day 2 #MindsetMonth:

{Practice Unapologetic Authenticity}

This is having the courage to show up as you and let the chips fall.

Last week, Jade and I were having a discussion and he said, "In order to be loved for who you are, you have to be brave enough to be who you really are."

This is so true, isn't it? Byron Katie's entire book, 'I Need Your Love: Is It True?' is based on the fact that many of us put on a constant show of who we think we *need* to be in order to garner love, affirmation and approval.

Sometimes it's subtle and we don't know we're doing it, like taking down a blog we've worked hard on because of an off-hand comment someone made. And other times, it's bigger, like entering a career we don't love in order to have a parent's approval, or staying in a relationship we know is not right because we're scared to hurt the other person's feelings or because "we have all this STUFF together!"

We consider others, sometimes to our own detriment. We are scared to show our true selves because we fear rejection or the discomfort of having to handling another person's emotions or because we don't want to be seen as a cruel or in a negative light. We try to save face.

But consider that when you are taking everyone else's advice, ideas and feelings into account, that you are not *really* living your own life. You're living a life based on what you think you need to do to be accepted. The "you" that people see is not really you, so any approval someone may offer is not even based on the reality of who you actually are.

Aaaaaaah! This is really hard, isn't it?

I don't know about you, but the older I get, the less tolerance I have for those who can't tolerate the way I am when showing up as is. I want my relationships to be established on seeing clearly who I am and accepting me (or not).

And the only way someone will have the opportunity to do that is if I quit being scared and start showing up unapologetically authentic in my life. It's on me.

Day 3 #MindsetMonth:

{Take Massive Action}

I heard this phrase first from my mentor [Rachel Cosgrove](#) in her annual mastermind a few years ago, and it really resonated. Because we can *think* things through endlessly, but until we actually DO, we can't really know what will work (and what won't).

Taking massive action helps in 2 ways:

1) It's the fastest way to build your confidence and overcome self-doubt.

Taking action immediately puts us in our power. We tend to feel helpless and stressed when we are focusing on the EMOTION and not the ACTION. Taking action breeds competency. And competency breeds confidence. And confidence leads to more action. It's a feed-forward cycle. This explains why the first step is always the hardest.

2) Actually *doing* teases out what works, and it's ultimately how you learn.

Failure is feedback. And we can theorize all day about the potential outcomes, but until we just try, we can't really know. Anyone who knows me knows that I act first and figure it out later. I jump even when the net is nowhere in sight. I TRUST that I can figure it out and handle whatever.

Action breeds confidence. And confidence breeds more success, even when that road is paved with failures. Because I get to win or learn, never lose.

"If you want to succeed, double your failure rate." ~Thomas J. Watson

This is also called the "As If Principle" where you act "as if" you are already the thing you want. Research suggests that when we DO, we are more likely to feel competent than just sitting around thinking about what we want.

Fake it till you make it! You don't need to know all the steps, you only need to know the first one 😊

Day 4 #MindsetMonth:

{Strive for Personal Freedom}

To me, personal freedom isn't *really* about being able to do whatever you want (although that's something I'm also a fan of), but instead it's about learning to maintain your inner peace regardless of what's going on around you.

Personal freedom is when you interact with situations, others people AND YOURSELF in a way that allows you to stay in your power and remain unaffected by drama, negativity, other people's agendas, whatever. This is levelheadedness. This is perspective.

And it's about *choosing* your attitude and your responses in every moment.

The first time I was introduced to this concept was in the book 'The Four Agreements' by Miguel Ruiz. It's a fast read and I highly recō as a quick-start guide to interacting with the world.

The four agreements (+ my own interpretations) are:

- 1) Be impeccable with your word. Meaning, stay within your integrity every time you speak and be honest. Honesty builds trust and deeper connections.
- 2) Never make assumptions. When we assume how others think or feel, we are boxing them in (and furthermore, placing limitations on OURSELVES). It doesn't serve us to not fully investigate any situation before deciding or taking action. Give people (and ourselves) the benefit of the doubt.
- 3) Don't take anything personally. People will always say what they say and do what they do. In 99% of cases, it's not malicious. When people act out or do/say 'hurtful' things it's usually born out of their own insecurities (we do this, too, BTW) and not about you. Mentally removing yourself is a great practice.
- 4) Do your best. Because the alternative is where we encounter the "expectation gap"-- the gap between where we *are* and where we think we *should* be. And that gap is misery. It doesn't propel us to action, and only serves to perpetuate our "not-good-enough"-ness. What you're doing today? That's your best. Same for everyone else. "Your best" will change day to day, and that's just perfect ☺

Day 5 #MindsetMonth:

The people closest to us are our greatest teachers.

Byron Katie says, "The person you live with is your greatest teacher." I believe that, totally.

Why? Because those closest to us offer us the best opportunities for growth. Think about it--it's not our neighbor or hairstylist that we have any major struggles with. It's those closest to us--parents, siblings, partners, children.

They push our buttons. Not because they're cruel or ill-willed, but because they challenge us. And in this way, they are our soul mates, placed in our lives to help us grow.

I can choose to see an argument or tension as "bad" and make it mean that there's something wrong with me (or them), OR I can see it as an *opportunity* to learn about MYSELF, and gain a greater understanding of how I come together with the dearest people in my life. What an amazing gift!

You're not obligated to make every relationship work perfectly. But, if you are introspective and want to learn, grow and get better, you *are* obligated to use your closest relationships as springboards for that.

Day 6 #MindsetMonth

Say "Thank you!" and then shut up

My friend Jen Sinkler, founder of [Thrive as the Fittest](#) has a most popular blog called, "Unapologetically Strong" where she puts "us" as women on blast for being unable to easily accept praise and compliments with grace and appreciation.

She wrote:

"At your next opportunity, eavesdrop on any conversation occurring among a group of women, and specifically listen for the downplaying of any compliment given to one another. Once you know what to look for, you will hear it, over and over again.

Instead of just saying "Thank you," we will say, "Oh no, this old thing/you're just being nice/it's just luck/etc./etc./etc.-motherscratching-etera."

It's part of the social script we are given at an early age, and you know what? It's total bullshit."

I have to agree. And in fact, I don't think deflecting compliments and shirking ownership is self-deprecating or humble. I think it's just straight-up awkward and even insulting to the person giving the praise.

Most of all, when we belittle our own value--even if doing it to appear humble or selfless--we are sending a message to our higher self that we *don't* matter and we *aren't* valuable or worthy.

And you know what? Words have weight. They mean something. They show up later in our self-assessment, whether conscious or not. We are subtly affirming (or not) our own value.

So next time someone gives you a compliment, practice accepting it gracefully. People won't think you're egotistical. In fact, they'll be relieved that you didn't make them sit there trying awkwardly to convince you of your own worth for 5 minutes

Here's Jen's awesome post - <http://www.jensinkler.com/unapologetically-strong/>

Day 7 #MindsetMonth:

{Complaining vs. taking action}

These two things are mutually exclusive. If we're complaining and blaming, in that moment, we are not doing something to help improve our situation.

And while that's fine and normal and common, emotions are not a solution. They are important because they direct us to where to investigate, but no one has ever solved a problem by way of anger, resentment or defending.

Blaming is easy, it's effortless. It's a lot harder to take 100% responsibility--whether it was our fault or not--to change our circumstances.

For me, the only option is radical responsibility. 100% ownership. Because when I'm *doing*, I'm immediately back in my power. And no one can get me to the next level but me!

Day 8 #MindsetMonth:

You guys ready to go deep with me today??

Martyrdom is victimhood in disguise.

Yesterday, we talked about blaming vs. responsibility. How when we blame circumstances, other people, "life," the world, etc, that in those moments, we are emoting, but not actually *doing*. Either is fine, it's just that the latter gets you results.

So we "get" the implications of blaming others.

But what about when we blame ourselves? What about when we sit around thinking we're no good? What about self-judgment and negative self-talk? We tend to think this is fine because well, at least we're not blaming others!

When I complain that "I should have known better," or "I should be better at this!" or "I hate that I can't eat healthy all the time! What's wrong with me? I suck!"

Can you see that I am being a victim in these times too? It's all still a distraction, too. It's still just a crutch to keep me from realizing my power and actually *doing*. It's just on the sly, and it's dressed up in humility and cultural norms

Think about it. Some of the things we say to ourselves we'd never in a million years say to a friend. And if you witnessed someone saying it to someone else, you'd think they were a straight-up jerk. How is it different when it's us?

It's just as useless and just as much of a distraction.

My sister-in-law Jillian, who has been an amazing friend and in a way a spiritual teacher for me once said, "If you want to get to get better, at some point you have to just get over yourself."

How true is that?! She actually wrote on the "usefulness" of guilt (or how not useful it is) here - <http://jillfit.com/2011/09/23/lean-guilt-useful-is/>

When we are using our mental space for self-judgment and to berate ourselves for not being "better" at all this, we don't have the mental energy available to actually DO what we say we want.

How do you break the self-judgment? For me, the practice is giving myself the benefit of the doubt. And then I practice doing that over and over and over again ☺

Day 9 #MindsetMonth:

Thoughts are things.

How you talk to yourself and what you *choose* to believe about yourself shows up in the world, unmistakably.

It shows up in how deserving you feel, the degree of confidence you exude and in the outcomes you achieve.

You matter. First and foremost for yourself. Because if YOU don't think you can do it, who will?

When I first got into the fitness profession, no one really understood how you "made a living." People said I was throwing away my degree and that it was a waste of time to train for a figure competition when grad school apps needed to be submitted.

I struggled with going the traditional desk-job route vs. figuring out how to make money, and (more importantly) a difference doing something I loved and following my dreams.

But at some point I had to choose: put stock in myself and own my choices regardless of who "gets it" and let the consequences be mine alone, OR fold and appease.

It was scary and uncomfortable, but I gave myself many mental pep talks and eventually stood firm in my passion, even though I had no clue what it would look like. Or really, how I would make it work. I just trusted that *I* would work.

The amazing thing is that later on, all those who initially questioned my decisions started getting on board after seeing the drive and passion it takes to follow your dreams! I am grateful for that support, and I can fully appreciate it now because I don't *need* it.

Self-belief matters big time. What you think about you is everything. You have to believe IN YOU first, no one else can. And then watch what happens

The universe gives you exactly what you believe you deserve 😊

Day 10 #MindsetMonth:

{Resiliency}

If I could hone one single quality that would offer me peace, perspective and results, it would be resiliency.

This is THE thing that separates those who succeed from those who don't.

Successful people don't just have amazing luck. They aren't sitting at home *thinking* about what they'd like to do. They are out doing it. And you know what, they are messing up left and right. How could they not? More action equals more chances for mistakes.

Is this scary? Of course. And it's the main reason why many people will never realize their greatest happiness or achievement, because it's comfy right here. Safe, secure and steady.

There's nothing wrong with safe and secure, except realize that the way we grow, learn and get better is not when everything is going smoothly. Besides, it's easy to be "all good" when everything's all good

We're given the opportunities to grow when we mess up. When we stretch ourselves and miss the mark. In obstacles and challenges. In the ugly moments.

And guess what? We can let those challenges be the end, OR we can learn and try again with more information and more experience. It's the ultimate in wisdom

I previously wrote on the power of resiliency here - <http://jillfit.com/2011/08/26/resiliency/>

"Winners are not afraid of losing. But losers are. Failure is part of the process of success. People who avoid failure also avoid success." ~Robert T. Kiyosaki

Day 11 #MindsetMonth:

I used to be someone who couldn't handle negative emotions. If a parent was upset, I took it on and made it about me. If my husband was frustrated about something, it meant I wasn't good enough. If a friend was hurting, it meant I did something wrong. If I hadn't heard from someone in a while, it meant they were mad at me.

I couldn't handle others' negative emotions because I made it all about me, and I would defend and deflect as a result. Tal Ben-Shahar in 'Being Happy' says this is a classic trait of a perfectionist. And that's not a compliment

Likewise, I could also never even *think* about what could possibly go wrong in any situation, not because I was extra confident, but because if I went there in my mind, it meant I wasn't doing a good enough job. I was lacking. Again, perfectionists. They fear failure because they make it mean they suck.

These two things. Kept me insecure, scared and not taking action for fear of messing up (and what it would mean!). I had zero resiliency because I was too insecure to put myself out enough to fail. I didn't want to even *think* I could mess up.

Fast forward 7 years and now I mess up all the time, ha! But it's because not only did I face down some of my insecurities, but I started using a tool called "Practical Pessimism." Watch the great 5-min vid on it here: <http://youtu.be/RwosCDOwRHQ>

It's a motivational tool that asks you to mentally GO to worst-case scenario, in your mind. Then, when you're there, you ask, "If that happened, could I handle it?" And then, "What would I do?"

And then you actually PLAN OUT the steps you'd take to cope. THIS, though scary, helps us DO MORE because we see that though it certainly wouldn't be fun, we could make it. This helps us get over our self-doubts. Because, look! We could do it!

It develops a possibility mindset.

So asking yourself, "What is the worst that can happen?" turns into "What can happen?"

Day 12 #MindsetMonth:

One suuuuper hard insight to learn, but one that is oh-so-true:

WHAT SOMEONE THINKS ABOUT ME IS NOT MY BUSINESS.

Author Byron Katie says there are 3 kinds of business:

- 1) Your business
- 2) Other people's business
- 3) God's business (things out of our control like natural disasters, etc)

And when we are trying to control how someone else sees us, or what they do or what they think or say, we are mentally out of our business. And when we are in someone else's business, who's managing ours?

It's not our job to control all that. And how could we ever hope to? It's a game we can never win.

Other things that are out of my business:

- Setting other people straight
- Giving unsolicited advice and then holding out hope it'll be taken (and then taking it personally when it's not)
- Other people's actions/emotions/words/thoughts/outcomes
- Trying to prevent others from "making mistakes" -- isn't this subjective anyway?
- Assuming other people will and should act how I would in a situation
- Whether or not someone "gets" me
- Understanding why people do what they do (not my business! It's theirs!)

And a million other things Trying to control things that are out of my control is misery.

For me, as soon as I started mentally staying in my business, doing me (and allowing other people to do them), life got a whole lot kinder ☺

Day 13 #MindsetMonth:

{We teach people how to treat us}

A little tough love for you today ...

I think the first time I heard this it was someone quoting Dr. Phil, and I didn't "get it" because ... how do I have any control over how someone treats me??

But years later, while listening to a talk by my mentor and biz coach [Rachel Cosgrove](#), she said "If someone's not treating you in a way you like, it's your fault."

Record-scratch moment for me.

Can we control what someone does or says? No. But we can ALWAYS control how WE interact with THEM.

A simple example: You have a friend who asks you to do things for her, help her with this, borrow money here and there, talk anytime she needs or go with her to this thing. So, like the good friend you are, you put your own needs aside because that's what friends do and you guys have a great friendship for years. But one time, she asks you to do something and well, you just don't want to or you can't. You tell her and she gets pissed.

Whose fault is this? Is this friend in the wrong for not understanding your feelings or seeing it from your perspective? Or have you taught her that you'll always drop everything for her, putting your own needs on the back burner? How else could she react when you don't? She doesn't know how to see it any other way because the two of you have established this dynamic.

You teach people how to treat you.

Your friend isn't *really* in the wrong. She's not a bitch. She's fine. She's just being the her she's always been.

For you, this is about politely, but firmly establishing boundaries in your relationships. No one is "better" than anyone else or more deserving. No one is "toxic" or "bad." People are just people and they do what they do. Someone who is "toxic" for you might be perfect for someone else. No judgment, only discernment.

Create the relationships in your life the way you want them. Take 100% responsibility for that. And if you just can't or don't want to make the effort, then that's fine too, but then take responsibility for that as well.

Be kind. Be empathetic. Look at it from another's point of view. And then make the necessary moves and own those choices. Your relationships are your responsibility.

Day 14 #MindsetMonth:

{Take what people say at face value}

Life started getting a whole lot easier when I started practicing this. It's all about trust.

And this is so hard, because we want to make assumptions and protect ourselves against what we perceive to be ulterior motives by others.

We say things like, "I have a great sense of intuition," or "I go with my gut," and "Well, I don't trust they really mean what they say." I understand that. And it can be scary taking something someone says at face value, because we want to make meaning out of things. We don't want to be taken advantage of or have someone pull the wool over our eyes. I get that too.

But the point is two things:

a) Making assumptions and thinking you know what someone *means* to say better than they themselves know is dangerous. Because when we interact in this way, we never trust anyone. We think people are working from an agenda. Talk about miserable! And not to mention, it's completely unfair to the other person. Let them own their truth (or falsity), it's not our job to decipher it all.

"But Jill, what if someone is lying to me?" Which brings me to...

b) If you take someone at face value and they are deceiving you, then that truth will come out eventually. And you'll learn from it at that point. You can make a decision at that point. What's the worst thing that can happen? You're made a fool of? Someone pulls one over on you? Aren't you only a victim if you decide you're one? Aren't you only "a fool" if you give that thought credence?

I know this concept is a really hard pill to swallow for many, but the alternative is waaaaay worse—never being able to trust anyone, constantly feeling like others are trying to take advantage of you, watching your back and never fully living because you're so worried about what others are doing. No thanks! You do YOU. Let them do them. No expectations, no judgment

Love this so much: "The best way to find out if you can trust somebody is to trust them."
~Earnest Hemingway

Day 15 #MindsetMonth:

On asking: WHY IS THIS HAPPENING TO ME?

I love today's mindset insight I picked up from my good friend [Liz DiAlto](#) a while back. It's a way to change your perspective when things aren't going according to plan or you encounter a new struggle or challenge.

We can *choose* our response. Here's how.

When something sucky happens, you can EITHER:

1) Throw your hands up in the air and exasperatedly ask, "Why is this happening to me???" like the world is out to get you and everything sucks and it's all bad.

OR, you can...

2) Rub your hands together, smile and ask, "Why is this happening to me?" like a little kid going on an adventure where you get to learn some new, unexpected lesson.

Liz gave the example of a 6-hour flight delay. Sucks, but it's also out of your control, so how do you choose to handle it? Do you adopt a victim mindset or a possibility mindset? It comes down to a simple choice.

Your perspective is your greatest tool. You literally create your reality in every moment.

Day 16 #MindsetMonth:

Resentment. We all feel it at times, we're human. But like all negative emotions, it clues us into an area where we might need to investigate, and do a little inner work.

For me, this:

- 1) I feel resentful when I am not getting my needs met.
- 2) Ironically, I am the only one who can meet my needs.

A reminder to look inward <3

Day 17 #MindsetMonth:



Today's #MindsetMonth post is a lil' personal.

I took this birthday #selfie this morning (as I always do on my birthdays) as a way to check in with where I'm at. Because it's all well and good to talk about incorporating wine into your meal plan and tout moderation and bacon, but if I am not getting the results that I want (both physically and mentally), then it's actually not working.

Here's where I'm at:

I am good.

I am probably the softest I have even been in my adult life, now 5 years from my last physique competition. But I also know that losing the 15 lbs it would take to get into "show shape" is way more work than I want to do. Frankly, it would take obsessive focus that I am not willing to harness.

So at this point, I have a choice: I can EITHER work to stay as healthy as I can and *maintain* my weight, while also limiting my obsession with food and exercise, OR I can try to hate-myself into a leaner body, never be satisfied and constantly be obsessed with every bite of food that passes my lips.

Over the last 4 years, I've adopted the former.

Could I be leaner? Of course. Could I get my love handles down a bit? Sure. But the mental and physical output it would take is just not worth it to me anymore. For me, "hardcore" turned into harmful, mentally, and I don't want that.

And so I practice moderation 24/7 now. I eat the same on Saturdays that I do on Mondays. I work hard to never feel deprived because I know that the more deprived I feel, the more likely I am to binge later.

I am done with the all-or-nothing mentality when it comes to getting lean. Over. It. Byyyyyeeee.

I want to enjoy life, spend quality time with family and friends, put energy into my business and into making a difference for women--and I can't do all of that while being obsessed with my body. And BTW, "enjoying life" doesn't mean eating everything in sight! That's hardly enjoyable!

And of course I still struggle at times because no matter how good you are at moderation, sugar still tastes good. That never changes. But what *does* change are your habits. My choices have been *practiced* for so long now that I simply don't want

that stuff 95% of the time (and I never thought I would EVER get to that point because I was a huge sugar-addict!). But when I do want it? Guess what? I eat it! I take bites of everything and anything, and that practice reinforces my moderate approach too.

Nothing is ever off-limits. It's all about finding a middle ground. Never feeling deprived, but also never eating everything I want.

For me, 33 is okay! Ox, Jill

Day 18 #MindsetMonth:

{On giving the benefit of the doubt}

I can't see one downside to giving others and ourselves the benefit of the doubt.

Because our *perception* of a situation is subjective. We can *choose* how we see things.

Do we assume people are innately malicious and out to do us wrong? Or, do we give people a chance to be the highest version of themselves?

Giving someone the benefit of the doubt is just working to see it from their perspective and then realizing that no one is perfect (including and most importantly, us!) and we are all just doing our best. And "our best" is different day to day, person to person. We can never assume we know what someone else's "best" is. Each person's journey is their own.

So showing empathy in all situations is not only risk-free but allows for greater understanding, insight and further discussion.

When we decide that someone is one way, and then put them in that box, we are essentially closing ourselves off from learning and growing because we've already decided who they are.

I would hate to be put in that box.

And most of all, I hate when I put MYSELF in a box: "I'm weak and undisciplined and disgusting!" Really? Am I? Isn't that just my perception? And a perception doesn't serve me.

Instead, I could give myself the BOD and say, "Gee, I know I haven't been perfect with my eating but I'm doing my best and I realize that habit formation takes time. All I can do is wake up, stay mindful and do my best. I'll get there."

THIS. For me, is so much more empowering and it just takes a little self-compassion.

Giving the BOD immediately changes the dynamic and our perception. Such a powerful tool!

Day 19 #MindsetMonth:

On saying "Yes" when we really want to say "No."

Byron Katie says, "Every choice you make should be a yes to yourself."

- When I say yes when I want to say yes, it's a yes to myself.
- When I say no when I want to say no, it's a yes to myself.

But often, we say yes to things we don't really want to. It may be out of obligation or guilt or fear of rejection or out of a desire to please. All normal emotions, but also ones that don't serve us.

But here's the thing. When we say yes when we really want to say no, we are not only NOT honoring *our* true desires and needs, BUT it also does the other person/people involved a disservice too. Because now they potentially have to deal with our resentment or bitterness --or even just our not giving it our all--as a result. Because we're not passionate about it. It's actually not our true choice.

And besides, personally, I would never want someone to say yes to me out of obligation. So think about it from the other person's perspective, too, and give them the benefit of the doubt. See if they can handle your truth--you owe them that opportunity, don't you?

A true friend would want you to show up as is, doing 100% want you to want to do and loving every minute of it. Not stressing or changing who you are for someone else (even them!). And if you have someone in your life who would rather you acted out of guilt or obligation, perhaps they are not the friend you think they are?

But ultimately, the choice is on us. Who can we blame when *we* make the decision to do something we don't want to do?

Sure, pressure is all around. But ultimately, no one has to live our lives except us. We're the ones who have to live with the life we create. So, can we corral the courage to act in line with our true desires??

It's a toughie! But a dishonest yes is a no to yourself 😊

Day 20 #MindsetMonth:

{The Confidence-Competency Loop}

A motivational tool to help us take more action in the face of fear.

It starts with one small action. Do one small thing that's a little out of your comfort zone. Have the experience, and see if you can survive and how you do. (Hint: you will always do fine!)

Then, once you get a small win under your belt, you experience a little confidence boost. That boost allows you to take a little larger action (competency) and see how that goes. And so on and so on.

Action--> Small win--> Confidence--> Competency--> Big wins

For me, one way I used this was with my nutrition. I used to be scared to *not* prep my food for fear of allowing myself to potentially get hungry. I thought if I got hungry, watch out, I'd just eat everything in sight! But was also sick of being a slave to my Tupperwares and fearful of going out in public because, WHAT WOULD I EAT??

So I started slowing pulling back on food prep and watching how I did. I started allowing myself to not have "a plan" and stayed aware of my responses. I started *relaxing* a little with "the rules" and over time I built the confidence and SELF-TRUST to handle any food situations that came up and still make a good choice.

Try it. See how you do! Action breeds confidence. And confidence leads to competency

Getting outside of your comfort zone >>>>

Day 21 #MindsetMonth:

Comparing yourself to others is a game you can never win.

The Comparison Trap: When you compare and contrast your physique (or intellect or beauty or success or whatever) to others and then end up feeling miserable as a result.

Doing this is effortless in today's social media culture, and yet it doesn't serve us. At all.

Here's the reality: You will ALWAYS find someone who's physique is leaner/more ripped/smaller/tighter/harder, etc than yours. We live in a relative world, it's inevitable.

So ask yourself, why am I constantly searching for someone who can trump me? What is the point if not to make yourself feel inferior?

When we do this, we are searching for some validation that we can never get, because someone will *always* have something that we consider to be a better "X" than us. We've lost the game before we've even started playing.

But isn't this just about perception? Couldn't you work to feel "good enough" regardless of what others are doing? Doesn't your body and your process and your journey actually HAVE NOTHING TO DO WITH the body, process and journey of someone else?

Your journey is 100% yours alone

And here are my 8 Ways to Avoid the Comparison Trap:

<http://jillfit.com/2012/04/23/comparison-trap/>

Day 22 #MindsetMonth:

This morning, Jade and I recorded a [#mindset](#) podcast and he asked me the question, "What is a victim?"

I kind of cringed at that question, only because I don't really like the word 'victim' because certainly clinically, people can be "the victim of a crime" or "the victim of physical abuse," etc and so it's a little vague.

But, what he was asking about is "The Victim Trap," which is actually A MINDSET that one may *choose* to use to show up in the world. For me, the victim mindset is one of powerlessness.

It takes away your choices and makes you feel like nothing you do matters or makes a difference. I think we can all agree that that's a sucky place to be. And THIS is the really hard part ... the victim mindset is actually a CHOICE.

Aaaaaah! We don't like that, because it's in many ways easier and less complicated when we insist that things are "being done to us" and that we have no say in it. When we believe this, we don't have to change or do anything. It's the most effortless operating system on earth.

When we believe that we've been done wrong and we hang onto THE EMOTION of that (anger, sadness, upset, frustration, whatever), it lets us off the hook and we don't have to take action.

But here's the thing. Staying mired in negative emotions is a choice. And it's also miserable and one that doesn't serve to help us get better. Is it natural? Yes, it's actually the human default. But emotions are also not a solution. TAKING ACTION is the solution.

So yes, even if you *are* technically "a victim" of someone else's choices (which you absolutely could be), you STILL have a say in where you go from there. You can always CHOOSE your response and what you DO as a result.

THIS. This is 'The Empowered Mindset' and it too is simply a choice

Is this hard? Of course! But when you take away all the mental aerobics and considerations and justifications, the bottom line is simple: YOU CHOOSE YOUR MINDSET.

[#OwnIt](#)

Day 23 #MindsetMonth:

{On expectations}

Personally, I think expectations can get us in trouble when we rely too heavily on them for both others AND ourselves.

We aren't perfect, and neither is anyone else. When someone says they're going to do something ... guess what? Sometimes they don't do it.

And that's just the way it is, and it's not personal and it doesn't mean they don't care about you or that they're intentionally trying to hurt you. People do what they do and they prioritize based on what they **can** do, not always on what they **should** do.

An example is a trainer or coach telling a client what to eat. Often, due to willpower drains, habits, rituals, exhaustion, stress, whatever, the client will not do it. They actually just can't do it (at least right now). And in light of that, it's absurd for the coach to get upset at this, because their client's inability to do it has nothing to do with them. Yet many do get upset. They take it personally and say "I don't want to waste my time."

I get that. Totally. But it's also an OPPORTUNITY to get better as a coach. The approach we're using might not be the best one (i.e. "Comply or die") so how about helping the client find shortcuts or work-arounds that give them wiggle room to--not be perfect--but do just a teeeeeeny bit better?

Meet your clients where they are and don't expect perfection. Don't even expect progress. Just expect an honest conversation, and to hone that, you need to teach that it's okay to mess up and then investigate it.

Expectations when we put them on others can leave us disappointed. And this is tough, isn't it? Because don't we need to rely on people in life? Of course, but I think there's an art to that: when someone meets your expectations, be grateful and don't take it for granted. Praise and appreciate it.

On the other hand, when someone doesn't meet your expectations, find the ability to show empathy and then discuss ways to help them be more effective (if that's what they want).

No one is perfect. Remember how it feels when **you** let someone down. It feels awful! But when someone shows you kindness and understanding instead of disappointment and anger, doesn't that make all the difference? In fact, you're probably **more** motivated to do for them when that happens.

Day 24 #MindsetMonth:

On patience:

During my competition days, my entire life was ruled by countdowns and fresh starts. I would have specific dates that I would "start my diet" for a show or a photo shoot.

And when I was dieting, it was always a race to GET AS LEAN AS POSSIBLE AS QUICKLY AS POSSIBLE. If I lost 5 lbs, I'd bump cardio to lose 10. Once I lost 10, I'd cut carbs to lose another few. I'd take drastic measures to lose as much as possible by the deadline. UNTIL ... show time!

But here was the trap: by the time I reached the show, I was so depleted and deprived that I couldn't NOT binge. I was out of my mind, eating whatever and however much I wanted, no thought to consequences or mindfulness. I felt miserable and disgusted with myself the whole time.

But then: "I need another show to get me back in shape!" And I'd pick a date to "start my diet" again. At which point, it would be game-on with food because at some point in the future, ALL THIS YUMMY FOOD was going to be off-limits!

Can you see the trap we fall into when adopting an urgency mindset? What's the big freaking rush?

And it wasn't until I quit competing, reached my breaking point with misery and food disgust that I finally, FINALLY said, "Okay, no more deadlines. I have to figure out how to eat healthy once and for all."

And I started sitting back and allowing myself to not be perfect. To not follow every nutrition rule to the T. To mess up and learn from it. To consider my actual lifestyle, personal preferences and psychological sensitivities. It wasn't until I slowed down and started taking *me* into account, that I actually started getting sustainable results.

Successful people take the long view. They don't need all the results right this second. They trust that they have the time and introspection potential to "get it" over time. AND THEY DO

They also know that lots of tiny wins add up to big successes if you just have the patience and perspective necessary.

Day 25 #MindsetMonth:

Let's quit the if-then game. We can never win it.

I used to think if I just lost my 10 lbs then I'd be good. I could "relax" and just "stay lean for forever."

Well, I did lose those 10 lbs many times over the course of 5 years. And what I was met with was not relief, but even more stress to a) keep it off, which required even more work and b) start looking for the next thing that needed improvement.

We lose 10 lbs and think we'll be happy. But when we do lose 10, we now want to get our legs down a bit, so we work on that. But once we lose some inches on our legs, we now notice that our upper body has gotten stringy, so need to bring that up, only to see that our abs need tweaking. And on and on and on...

This is a trap.

The solution? Self-compassion in the moment.

Because body esteem is not objective. You don't just get down to 15% body fat and automatically think you're good enough. Your ability to be comfy in your own skin and own your unique awesomeness is completely subjective.

I've witnessed fitness competitors sitting at 12% body fat who are incredibly insecure about their physique. And alternatively, I've known plenty of overweight women who love every inch of their bodies.

Who's to say which approach is healthier?

For me, I'd argue that having a lean physique that you are constantly obsessing over and can't appreciate is actually *worse* than being a few pounds overweight but being good with it.

This is about mindset.

Day 26 #MindsetMonth:

"Active Acceptance" is acceptance without resignation.

Many of us don't like the concept of "self-acceptance" because it feels like giving up and settling. Or even condoning the behavior.

So we hold on to feelings like guilt and shame and remorse as if they serve to motivate us to get better. After a binge, we wake up the next morning and beat ourselves up because self-beratement feels like the most *useful* emotion because without it, it means we accept what happened. OR we'll REALLY go all out next time!

Here's the thing though. Last night *did* happen. So we kind of *have to* accept it—it's reality. Accepting does not mean we condone it or want it to happen again or like it.

But we find ourselves using the negative emotions because they feel like action. Guilt feels like we are doing something, like prevention. Which is the actual problem because feeling guilty takes up valuable headspace. It takes mental energy to keep hating yourself. Mental energy that COULD be used to make a better decision later today, at our next meal. A better strategy

Active acceptance says we accept what happened (we kind of have to—it's what actually happened) but that doesn't mean we don't continue to strive to get better.

When you slip up, own it, investigate it, and then move on with a clear head.

Love this from 'Happier' by Tal Ben-Shahar:

"Active acceptance is about recognizing things as they are and then choosing the course of action we deem appropriate and worthy of ourselves. It is about recognizing that at every moment in our life we have a choice—to be afraid and yet to act courageously, to feel jealous and yet to act benevolently, to accept being human and act with humanity."

Day 27 #MindsetMonth:

Wisdom is saying, "I'll be okay no matter what."

Wisdom is trust in yourself, the world, the process. Wisdom is the grandmother who has a greater perspective than her children and grandchildren. Wisdom is knowledge + experience.

The experience piece is huge here, because the more experiences you have, the more likely you are to TRUST that you can handle whatever pops up. You've just been through more stuff, and had more challenges and had more opportunities for resiliency.

My lifting partner Tara started training with heavy weights for the first time 6 years ago. Previously, she was a Body Pump instructor and long-distance runner. I remember giving her a 35-lb dumbbell to do a single-arm bent-over row and she said, "I can't do that." I said, "Yes you can, just try a couple." And whaddya know? She did the whole set. That was the beginning and she hasn't looked back since.

I recently asked her how changing her weight training routine (and by extension, her physique) influenced her, if at all, in other areas. She said it helped her feel like she "could do more" and "try new things" outside the realm of fitness, like public speaking or starting an online biz at [Prime Life Fit](#) or navigating her personal relationships better.

THIS. This is empowerment and SELF-TRUST.

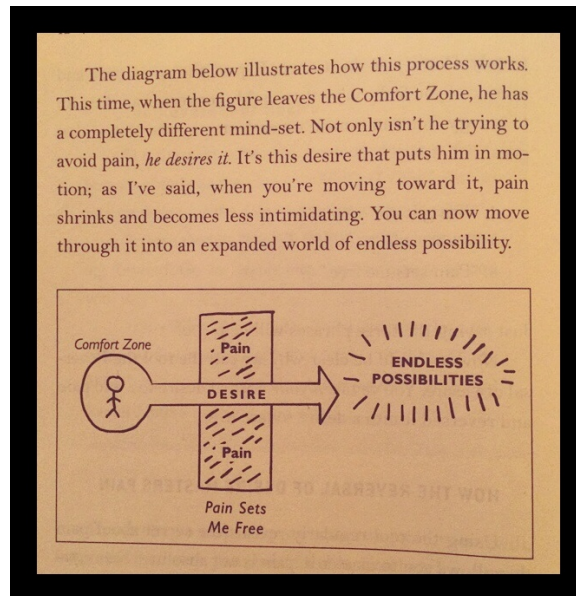
Action begets trust. In yourself.

And when you have trust in yourself, you know that whatever happens, though it may be scary or uncomfortable or downright painful, you can handle it.

But it begins with getting a leeeetle bit out of your comfort zone

More experiences, more insight, more trust, more "I'll be okay."
More wisdom.

Day 28 #MindsetMonth:



Rereading the book 'The Tools' by Phil Stutz and Barry Michels and reminded of why it was so game-changing for me upon first read 3 years ago:

One of "the tools" is called 'The Reversal of Desire.'

In essence, this tool is used to transform your challenges into confidence and achievement by GOING TOWARDS THE DISCOMFORT. Seeking it out! Searching out the heard stuff, leaning into the struggle.

Our challenges diminish when we face them--they actually reduce in intensity and urgency when they get attention from us.

This is soooooo hard to do experientially. Sounds all good until you actually have an opportunity to try it, ha! But in those moments of courage when you can be honest with yourself and face your fears head-on, it's the most transformative thing.

Want to quit that job that you hate? Want to start your own biz? Want to leave that relationship that is making you miserable? Want to speak up to that one person?

Gah! So hard. But also empowering. These are the massively courageous actions that we sometimes see in other people taking and think, "Wow, I wish I could do that!" <--- YES!

The Reversal of Desire says we shouldn't just "deal" with pain as it comes. It says that pain actually **is** the way. Aaaaaaah!

We all have struggles. And we can be scared of them or we can meet them head on. It's ultimately just a choice in perception and awareness.

Day 29 #MindsetMonth:

On choice.

I am a recovering martyr. By that I mean that most of my life I took pride and derived my self-worth based on how "bad" I had it.

At the gym at 5am to do cardio? Poor me. Teaching 15 fitness classes a week and personal training 12 clients a day? I WAS THE HARDEST WORKING PERSON I KNEW. No one had it worse. Stick it out in a bad situation on principle? Hell yes. I would always be the first to "go without" or "stick it out" because that's the only way I knew how to feel worthy.

Nothing wrong with hard work and tenacity. EXCEPT. When you are doing it for the wrong reasons.

I was doing things I didn't want to do and that actually made me miserable just to prove that I was mentally strong and well, a martyr. Putting my own needs aside so as to appear to be the one getting the short end of the stick.

Well, about 5 years ago, I started to make some changes and asked, "How is this helping me grow, change and get better? I am always feeling bad for myself and trying to gain pity from others and all the while, I am not making any progress." It wasn't helping me, it was keeping me small, scared and drowning in obligation.

It can feel noble to "stick it out." But there's a HUGE difference between making a choice based on the idea that you *should* (there's that word again!) stick it out, and making a choice based on your genuine desires and out of conscious awareness.

Choosing what you want out of conscious awareness comes from within. No considerations. And you choose it for yourself. Not because someone else is forcing your hand or out of some imagined sense of duty.

Being a martyr might be noble. But it also keeps you in the trap of always doing what others want you to do and never realizing your highest self.

And ultimately, this is a choice. Do you choose obligation, or do you choose you?

Day 30 #MindsetMonth:

{On the utility of passion}

A few months ago, Jade said, "Passion is the ultimate time-management tool. If you are passionate about it, you will find the time to do it."

Isn't this so true?

But many people hear might feel bad hearing this because they say, "Well I don't know what my passion is!" I get that. Because often, as we go through life we keep our head down grinding and don't ever stop to ask what direction we are going on. Or if we are even doing what we love? This is so, soooo normal.

So how do you find your passion? And can you build it to the point of productivity?

I believe you can.

It first starts with knowing yourself, which is a huge task, and requires asking some of the toughest questions:

- What would I do all day if left to my own devices? No considerations?
- If I could talk to someone all day about something, what would it be?
- What thing would I do that even if I wasn't getting paid, I would still do it?
- When I browse online, what subjects do I tend to search out?
- What kinds of magazines or TV shows do I love?
- Who are the people I admire, and why do I admire them? (Envy Map)

Once you identify your interests, think about what ACTIONS you could take in those realms. Is there a class you could take to boost your knowledge? Are there clubs you can join? What credentials or certifications are there around it? Who is doing it well, and how can you organically network with them? What's one single step you can take toward actualizing a foothold in that area?

This is now you develop your passion: by getting involved, by taking one small action.

One small action turns into some small wins. Which begets bigger actions, and bigger successes, until one day you wake up in a few years, and you are involved in something you never thought possible.

Passion is the life force! It's the key to not only productivity but personal fulfillment. At least for me ☺

Day 31 #MindsetMonth:

"I complete myself."

In our society, oftentimes we make our happiness about other people. Our kids make us happy (of course they do!), and our spouse/partner makes us happy (of course they do!), but deep personal fulfillment means that you could be happy without these things too.

That doesn't mean that we get rid of them, but instead we simply ACKNOWLEDGE that we would be fine on our own. We *choose* to have them. We love and want our children, we wouldn't have it any other way. We love and want our partners, we wouldn't want it any other way.

BUT, if we are truly committed to personal happiness, it should not rely on them being there to do and say things to make us happy. Besides, that's putting a lot of pressure to put on them, no?

We CHOOSE for them to be there; they ENRICH our lives. They make us better. They teach us. They put a smile on our faces. They give us a deeper sense of purpose.

But we innately have purpose on our own, too.

We have inherent self--worth that cannot be taken from us, regardless of children, spouses, jobs, money, cars, family, friends, possessions, etc. Our natural state, alone, is enough to be happy. Aaaaah, this can be hard, right?

Yet, life is beautiful in that we can supplement it (spouses, children, friends, possessions, etc) because those things enrich our sense of happiness. But they do not DEFINE our happiness. There is a subtle distinction here, and I wonder if you can get it?

Which brings me to the movie Jerry McGuire

I love that movie (though admittedly not a huge Tom Cruise fan :))—I just love the underdog story. But, the one part that I have a really hard time with is the “You complete me” piece. Is it incredibly sweet? Yes! Does it make us swoon? Of course!

BUT, the flip side of that scene is that it subtly tells that story that we need someone else to make us happy, that without another person of our choosing (and of course that perfect person needs to choose us too!), somehow we are not okay or “whole.”

Maybe a better line would be something like, “You enrich my own inherent completeness.” ??? Doesn't have the same feel though, does it? Ha, ha!

I might be getting too deep for you, but I challenge you to look at this through a different lens. What if you took the traditional story of two people “needing each other” and flipped it on its head?

Can you go to a place in your mind where you understand that you can be happy on your own, but that you CHOOSE to have a spouse, partner, close friends, children, etc. to enrich your already--fulfilled existence?