

A GUIDE

# FROM STRESS TO RELAXATION



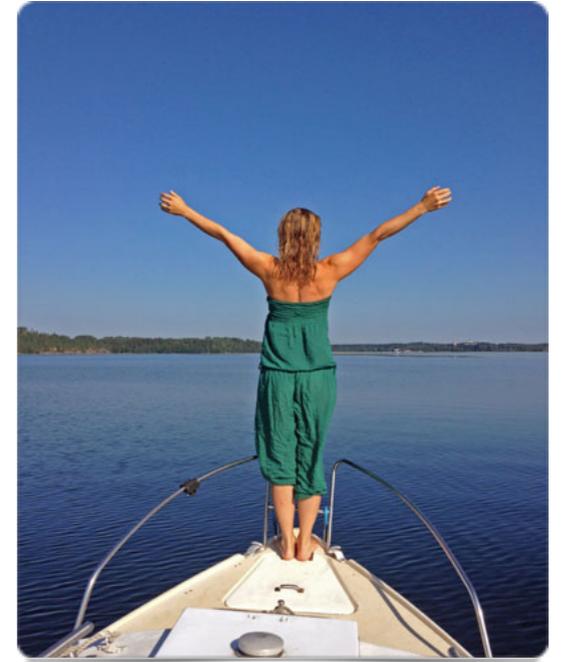
10 Ways To Wellbeing  
With The Help Of Nature

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*“Tension is who you think you should be.  
Relaxation is who you are.”*

*-Chinese proverb-*



# This is what I want to tell you about:



*Disclaimer: This guide is based on my personal experiences. Notice that I am not a licensed health or medical professional. Please, consult your doctor with any issues you feel you cannot handle alone. Remember, seeking help is not a sign of weakness, it is a sign of strength.*

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# Natural Wellbeing Is Peace Of Mind

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To be able to just be & to feel relaxed. What an amazing feeling that is! In fact it is not just a great feeling.

**When we are able to be relaxed, we perform better overall. We perform better at home and at work. We are better to ourselves and to others. We are healthier and happier people.**

Things that prevent us from being relaxed come from both inside & from outside of us. Stress is the enemy of relaxation. Stress, if there is too much of it or if it continues for too long, can make us sick both physically and mentally. We cannot eliminate all stress from this life, yet we can do a lot to experience less of it. We can also learn to how manage it better.

This guide has been born from my life's challenges and from the lessons I have learned from them. My burnout, difficult pregnancy, marriage crisis, and depression all produced a lot of stress for me. My life as a entrepreneur isn't stressless either, yet it includes more and more moments of wonderful relaxation. With this guide I want to help you to experience more of these moments too.

*“Allow nature's peace to flow into you as sunshine flows into trees.”*, said John Muir. Through the ages, people have searched for health and happiness through connection with nature. They still continue to and it still works. Nature can be a great support in your journey from stress to relaxation. It can help you to find natural ways for you to feel better in your body & mind. It can help you to find the heart of natural wellbeing. The peace of mind that enables you to *just be you*, and to feel relaxed by doing so.

*Mari*



# Stress = Too Much | Relaxation = Balance

A calendar that is too full. Too much pressures. Too many worries. Too much work to do. Too much noise inside and out. Too much emotional and physical pain. Stress can be caused by many things, yet it is often about having too much of something for too long of a time.

*“I worked too much for too long of a time. My body and my mind were under a constant stress for so long that they were finally unable to relax even while I was sleeping. I started to get panic attacks and heart arrhythmia. I felt that even getting out of the bed in the morning was too much work.”*

To have less stress, we often need to have less busyness. Less busyness gives us more time and energy for the things that are crucial in being able to relax.

The answer is to *find our way to a balanced life*  
and to learn better skills in maintaining balance into the future.

# What Is Enough? (Am I Enough?)

*“This is what I started to ask myself. Over time, the question led me to realize that I felt that I wasn’t enough. I tried constantly do more, to be something more, to be better, so I looked outside of myself to earn it in some way.”*



In the world that is demanding and also so full of everything it is anything but easy to live a balanced life.

*What is enough?* ...is a question that still works as a guide for me; What is enough screen time? What is enough food? What is good enough?

**“Enough” is a place to stop. It is the keyword for finding a life of balance. Both too much and too little creates stress. “Enough” leaves time & energy for relaxation.**

To get the inner feeling that as an imperfect human *I am enough* is extremely hard in our world that idolizes perfection. Yet, it is still a feeling worth searching for.

Actually, it is all that you need to find to feel deeply relaxed.

# What Do YOU Think?

*“For a long time I pursued a life that I thought I wanted; success, a better salary etc. My burnout led me to question my life choices up to this point. In nature’s silence I realized that the things that I really wanted were elsewhere. I also realized that they had very little to do with fame and money.”*

You easily lose yourself in this world. There is so much information, so many opinions, so many good marketers, so many sites and channels to drown in.

**Find a place where you can hear your own voice. A place where you can ask yourself “What do I think is right?”** That kind of a place is crucial when finding a way from stress to relaxation. Use this place as an anchor. Use it as a place where you can go when you need to make big decisions in your life. Don’t let other people make these decisions for you.

We all have the wisdom within. If we listen to our mind & body carefully, we know what is good and what is bad for us. We know what is right and what is wrong in our life. Find that voice and little by little you will find ways to reshape your way of living and being.



# No Extremes, But A Better Life

*“First, I started by simplifying my life. Then, I learned to take better care of my basic physical needs. Lastly, I found the power of strengthening my mind. These 3 actions have helped me to get my life into balance, to feel less stressed and to feel more relaxed overall. They are still the main guidelines in my life.”*

By simplifying life, you thus create MORE TIME.

By prioritizing your basic needs you get MORE ENERGY.

By strengthening your mind, you learn to MANAGE THOUGHTS AND FEELINGS that waste your precious time & energy.

Together these 3 actions help you to cut down on stress & to find a more relaxed experience of yourself.

Using these action steps help you to have better day-to-day life balance and to be more present in your own life. They can also lead you to feel deeply connected with yourself, with other people, and with all of life around you.



# Seek Simplicity In Everything

It is really not the quantity of everyday life that matters in the end - It is the quality of everyday life.



It is good that we want things in life. It is a sign of growth, of development, and of future potential. The problem is that often, when we finally get something, we start to want it more and more.

To feel more balanced and relaxed we need to cut down on the amount of stuff we bring into our life - both material and immaterial. This includes also the stuff in our heads.

Simplifying our lives is not about going back in time to live primitively again. It is not about minimalism either. It is about getting rid of the meaningless stuff in our lives. It is about learning to concentrate more on the things that we feel are important and good for our wellbeing.

**Simplifying your life is about finding what's enough instead of always having too much. It is about learning to want less.**

# I. Improve your self-awareness

*“When my mom and I planted a vegetable garden together I began to ask her about our family history. I hadn’t experienced war, yet after getting to know my roots, I came to realize how the consequences of war were still living in me as well. I understand myself so much better now due to learning all of this.”*



SELF-AWARENESS IS YOUR FILTER IN THIS WORLD OF ABUNDANCE. It is the base which helps you to simplify your life. It can give you the confidence to say “No thanks” to things without need to think about them later in the future. The better your awareness is, the easier it will be for you to know works for you and what simply does not. Making life choices gets easier as your self-awareness grows.

Self-awareness is not just about getting to know your own body and your own mind. It is also about knowing your roots; the history of your family, your home region, your country and your culture. This includes not only the nice aspects of these yet also (and especially) the harder aspects.

## **How to improve your self-awareness?**

Find a situation which you feel you can truly be yourself, away from outside expectations and everyday pressures. Think carefully about this situation - perhaps it involves something you do regularly - a hobby, for instance. If you think about your personality or your physical traits, are your hobbies really feeding who you truly are? Why did you choose to start them in the first place?

Read more: [Let Self-Awareness To Guide Your Life](#)

## 2. Find what is most meaningful for you

*“During my second pregnancy I sat by the lake a lot. I learned to relax so that our baby would not be born too early. I have given a lot of thought to those moments by the lake almost every day since. They stand as a reminder regarding what is most meaningful in my life and they help me to make better life choices.”*



KNOWLEDGE ABOUT WHAT IS MOST MEANINGFUL CAN HELP US CUT DOWN OUR STRESS & HURRIEDNESS. No matter how well you know yourself, you may still end up burning yourself out. You cannot do everything you'd like to do, so you have to make choices in life.

Out of all of the things in life we can focus on, finding the most meaningful ones and concentrating fully on them is one big way to create balance and to really enjoy that which you choose to do in your life. The more you do that which you feel really matters, the more meaning you feel your life has overall.

### **How to find what is most meaningful for you?**

Find a peaceful place to go where you can focus. List out 10 items in life which you really want to focus on and spend your time doing. Then cut it down to half. Finally, select 3 of these items which feel most meaningful to you.

Read more: [A Meaningful Life Is Handmade](#)

### 3. Invest in quality time

*“Five summers in boat home has taught our family how little we actually need for living. We need so much less than we thought. It is truly not the material stuff that makes us happy after all, but the time spent with our loved ones without any hurry or stress.”*



**QUALITY TIME OFTEN HAS LESS TO DO WITH MONEY.** Yes, it is true we need money for living expenses. We need to work for the money in order to buy the things we need. Yet, how much we really need if we are able to get all that would allow us to live happily ever after? What if we just end up living in a trap where we are forced to work more in order to maintain the standard of living and the circumstances that we've created for ourselves through this work?

Yes, you can spend a lot of money in creating the quality time you want for yourself and your loved ones. But is it necessary? What does quality time really mean to you? What does it really require to arrange this time? Think about this.

#### **How can you learn to invest in quality time?**

Remember the 3 most important items I instructed you to find? Make a choice to spend at least one hour of your time on each day during next week on these items. After you have done this for a week, reflect on how you feel. How do you feel when you spend your time regularly on things that truly matter the most to you?

Read more: [Learn To Want Less](#)

# Prioritize Your Basic Needs

If we do not move and eat as we need to daily and sleep well nightly, we will get sick. It is that simple.

More and more opportunities are available to us nowadays. This is a wonderful thing, and yet it can also be a threat to our health. When we extend our time and energy towards too many interesting opportunities in life, we can easily neglect our basic needs. We can easily take our basic needs for granted and forget about them altogether until we are in trouble.

Prioritizing our basic needs is about moving our bodies enough, eating enough good food, and sleeping enough. It is important that we don't go to extremes in any of these areas, leading us unable to even enjoy of the interesting opportunities we are working towards in the first place.

**It's all about taking care of your basic needs so well that you can really enjoy your life and what matters most to you.**



## 4. Move your body

*“I can definitely say that walking helped heal me from my depression. When I was depressed I didn’t have the energy to exercise, so I walked. Most of the time it was just short walks, yet they definitely helped me to feel better. In a life situation involving depression, those feelings of relief were invaluable.”*



**WALK. JUMP. STRETCH. JUST MOVE IN SOME WAY.**

Moving your body is not officially a basic need, yet I believe that in today’s world it definitely should be. It is not self-evident anymore by our lifestyles that we move enough daily. There are so many things that easily make our way of life very passive. *Too passive.*

Being active physically releases endorphins. Endorphins are hormones that decrease stress and increase relaxation. Being physically active is not only important for our body, it is also important also for our mental health.

**How to find a way to move that is natural for you?**

When you’re having a day off, take some time to think about how you would like to move your body. Trust your intuition. Your movement doesn’t have to be something you mind says is good for you. Just listen to your intuition and start doing what feels right. Do whatever feels natural and like a good way for you to move at the time.

Read more: [The Story About My Depression And How I Won It Without Antidepressants](#)

## 5. Eat well

*“My relationships with men haven’t been easy but maybe the hardest relationship I’ve had is with food. Over time the same has happened with food than with men; the better I’ve started to feel in my body & mind, the healthier my relationship with food has also become.”*



**YOU ARE WHAT YOU EAT.** It is so true. What kinds and how much food you put into your mouth means a lot. And it is not only the food itself that matters, it is also everything else that relates to eating.

Eating well is about knowing what you eat and appreciation your food. It is about investing time and energy in developing a balanced and relaxed relationship with food that allows you to eat everything in moderation.

### **How can you learn to eat better?**

Day 1: Challenge yourself to go to the farmers market. Talk with the sellers and ask where the food is coming from and how it is grown. Pick up some of your favorite foods, take some time to cook it properly, and then enjoy it mindfully. No iPads or iPhones while you eat.

Day 2: Order a pizza. Eat it while watching TV.

Now compare your food experiences.

Read more: [Always Sit Down To Eat](#)

# 6. Sleep enough

*“Every time I have taken less time for sleep in order to manage other areas of my life, the results have been bad. The quality of my family life has gone down. The quality of my work has gone down. If I were to name the biggest stress factors in my life, sleep debt would definitely be within the top three.”*



SLEEPING IS A CORNERSTONE OF A BALANCED LIFE. And yet, it is a basic need that we so easily neglect. We take time from sleeping to watch TV, to interact on social media, to work more, etc. Sleep debt is known to cause many health problems, such as premature aging, weight gain, and it definitely worsens symptoms of depression.

Invest in the quality and quantity of your sleep. Figure out what is enough sleep for your body. Work on things that make you sleep badly. Sleeping is one of the simplest way to feel less stressed and more relaxed.

## **How to sleep better?**

Go for an evening walk. Take deep breaths. Have some tea after coming back. No TV before bedtime. Do not take any devices into your bedroom when you go to sleep. Reflect on your experience afterwards.

Read more: [Make Sleeping Matter](#)

# Strengthen Your Mind

Master your thoughts and feelings, and you'll be the better master of your life.

No matter how much down-time you have, you still cannot feel totally relaxed if your head is full of worries. Anxious thoughts will keep both your mind and your body under stress.

Working with your thoughts and feelings can be hard, maybe the hardest work in the world, yet it is not impossible work. It is a skill that you can learn like any other skill - you just need to practice, practice and practice.

Strengthening your mind is all about learning new ways to process whatever life throws at you.

**Strengthening your mind is about learning to process life in ways that will lead to less long-term burdens, and will transform the heavy issues on your shoulders into lighter issues, which makes your whole life easier.**



# 7. Do not fear your feelings

*“In my marriage crisis I was forced to go through feelings like anger, bitterness, shame, sadness, and fear. It was scary to notice how destructive these feelings can be to our mental and physical health. These feelings can be extremely hard to handle, and yet even worse is if you allow yourself to get stuck in them.”*



LEARNING TO PROCESS ALL OF YOUR FEELINGS IS ONE KEY TO A DEEPER STATE OF RELAXATION. We end up using a lot of our time and energy to avoid these kinds of uncomfortable feelings, and the fear of being forced to face them can be stressful.

When you learn not to be afraid of any feelings and can better accept all of them, you are then able to be more open to life, to other people, and to yourself as well. You can learn not to run away from them anymore, but to use them for learning about yourself. You can also be more relaxed when you know that you will survive no matter what you need to go through in your life.

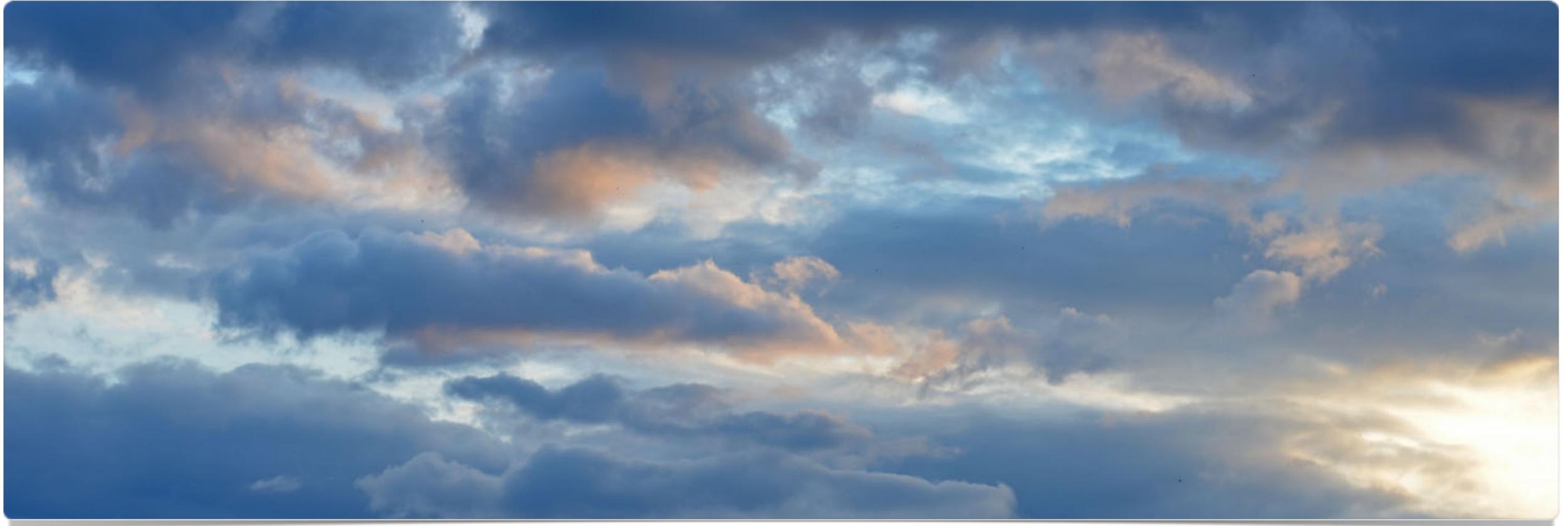
## **How to let it out?**

The next time you feel angry, don't hold it back. Scream. Don't direct your anger towards the person you are angry at, yet do this somewhere where you are alone. Just let it out. Then call a friend. Talk about what made you angry and how it left you feeling. Allow your anger to come out, yet also process it with a with intention. If you just feel the feeling, it may not go away, yet instead it grow bigger over time.

Read more: [It Takes A Lot To Know A Human](#)

# 8. Understand your ego

*“It took me long time to realize how the ego works in each of us. All the time. Now I think the fact that it is so hard to understand tells a lot about how sneaky it can be. And also how bad the consequences can be if something or someone hurts one’s ego.”*



**KEEP YOUR EGO UNDER YOUR CONTROL.** Like our feelings, our ego is not something you should run away from. Denying it, only gives it more power over you. In worst cases, our ego can potentially make us very lonely and drive us to hurt the people around us -even if we recognize that is what is happening.

Ego is often understood as something bad, however, a healthy ego can also serve for the good. You just need to do the mental work to understand how it works first. Then, have it under your control and teach it to serve good. All that work is hard, yet it is also a very empowering experience to be able to get a grip over something as powerful as your ego.

## **How to work with the ego?**

Go outside when it is stormy. Expose yourself to the power of nature - something that a human clearly has no power over. Feeling how small we all truly are in the end can be scary, yet it is also a healthy experience to have every now and then.

Read more: [Acknowledge Your Ego](#)

## 9. Set healthy boundaries

*“No wonder I’ve burnt myself out, have had problems in my relationships, and then became depressed. I have allowed other people and things to define what kind of person I am and to decide for me how I use my time and my energy. My attempts to keep others happy led to no good for anyone in the long run.”*



HEALTHY BOUNDARIES PREVENT LIFE AND OTHER PEOPLE FROM DRAINING YOU. Learning to set healthy boundaries is a lot about learning and developing the self-awareness, the courage and the confidence to use the words “Yes” and “No” in ways that feel right for you personally.

Setting boundaries affects everything in your life, both the things inside and the things of you. We have both physical and mental boundaries to work on. This includes people, work, food, feelings, thoughts, etc. Learning to build and maintain better boundaries is a very important skill to have in today’s world.

### **How to learn to set boundaries for yourself?**

Next time someone asks you to go somewhere, think twice before you respond. Do you really want to go? Is it going related to something on your “what matters the most” list? How have you responded in similar situations in the past? What were the past consequences? How has this left you feeling?

Read more: [Don’t Let Your Fire Burn Out](#)

# Top 10. Stay connected

*“Stress involves disconnecting from myself. When I feel disconnected, I cannot be truly present with other people or even enjoy my life wholeheartedly. I hate feeling this way! This is why I want to find ways to have less stress in my life. The more relaxed I can be, the more connected I feel overall. I think it is one of the most beautiful feelings in the world to feel connected.”*

CONNECTION GIVES US THE FEELING THAT WE ARE NOT ALONE. Staying connected enables us to get more out of our life as well. It also enables us to take better care of our wellbeing. With better self-care, combined with good self-awareness, we are able to notice earlier if some things are not right with our body or our mind.

Better connection with ourselves, other people, and life in general will naturally lower stress levels, leaving us feeling more relaxed and with greater peace of mind.

## **How to feel more connected?**

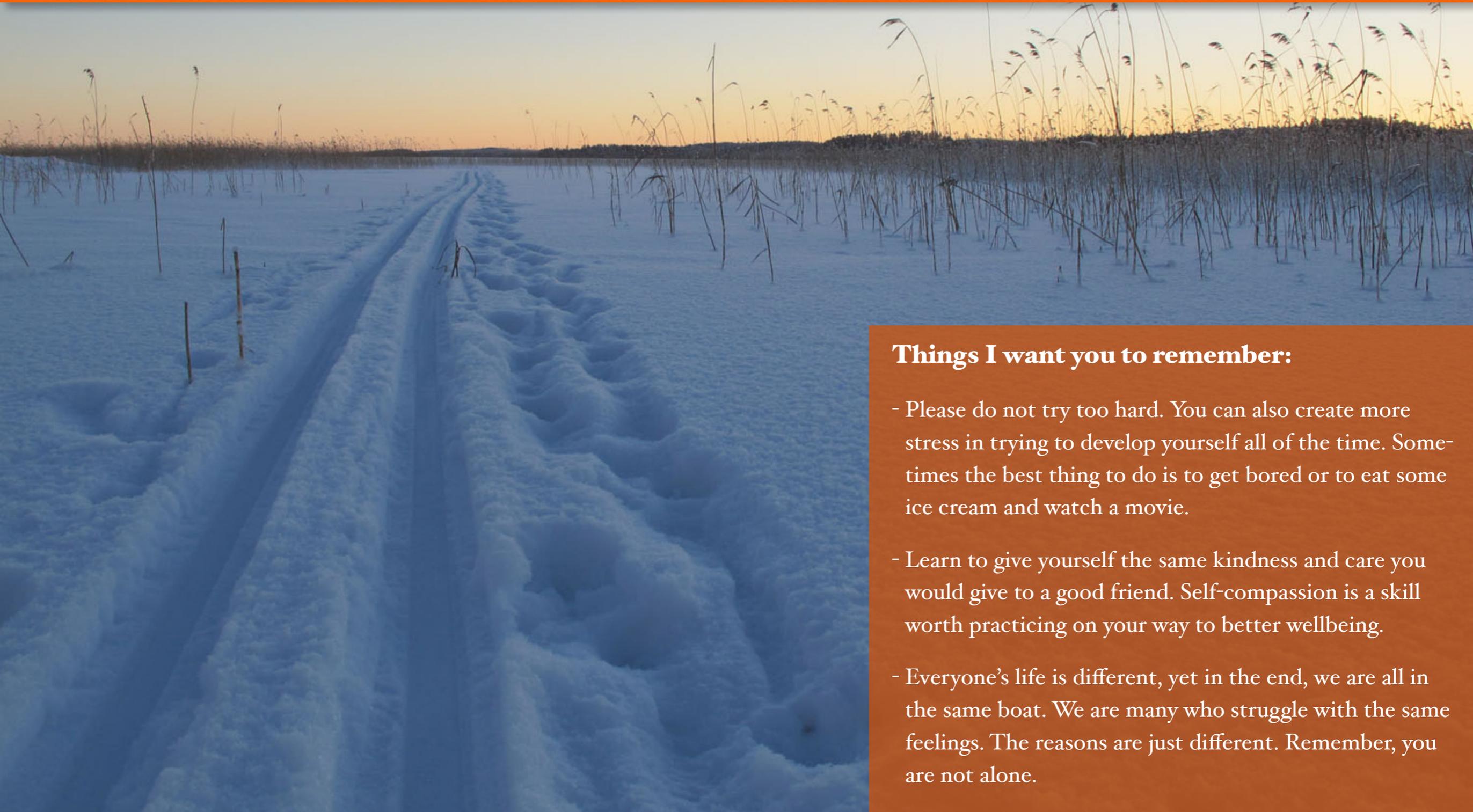
Go walking in your bare feet. Do this in nature. On a beach, for instance. Leave your phone at home. Walk using your own natural rhythms. Listen to your breathing and try not think about the past or the future. Just walk peacefully and be in the moment.

Read more: [Just Be For A Minute \(With Me\)](#)



# Good Things Come Slow

*“Working for a more relaxed you is a lifelong process. It is a cliché, yet it is important to enjoy the journey. The journey itself is your life and you will not get a chance to live it again. Grow in your own rhythms and in your own ways. You are in no hurry.”*



## **Things I want you to remember:**

- Please do not try too hard. You can also create more stress in trying to develop yourself all of the time. Sometimes the best thing to do is to get bored or to eat some ice cream and watch a movie.
- Learn to give yourself the same kindness and care you would give to a good friend. Self-compassion is a skill worth practicing on your way to better wellbeing.
- Everyone's life is different, yet in the end, we are all in the same boat. We are many who struggle with the same feelings. The reasons are just different. Remember, you are not alone.

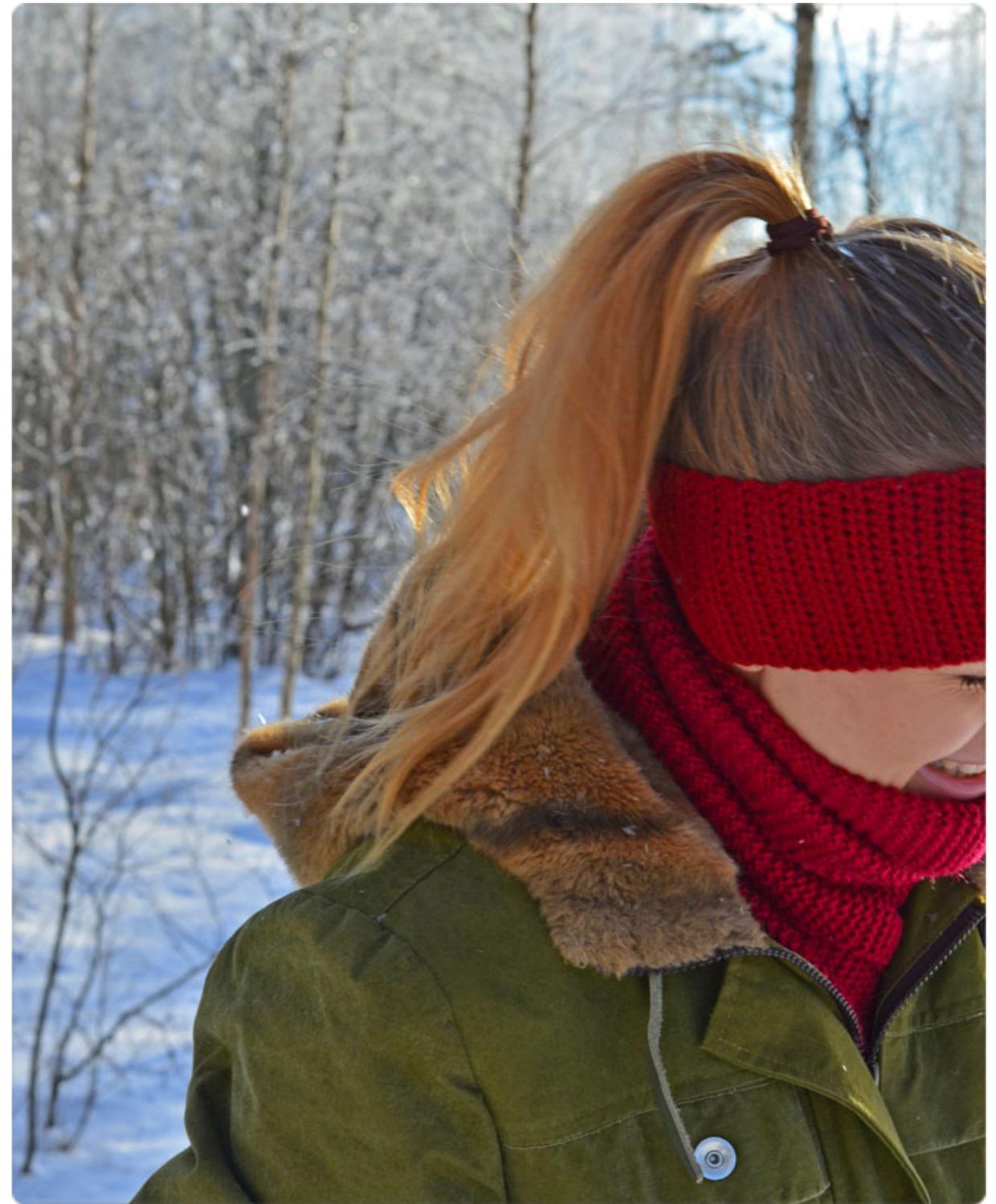
# A Word About Motivation

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Self-growth requires a lot of work and is full of setbacks which may easily leave you wanting to give up. Those feelings are understandable and human, yet remember that they are only feelings, not real facts.

## **What motivates me not to give up?**

- Remembering that setbacks are a part of the process just as the successes are. Learn from the setbacks, rejoice in the successes & keep moving forward. Something will always come up, but that's just life.
- Recognizing the amazing feelings that grow in us when not only is our stress managed, but also our life management skills have improved because we have learned how to take responsibility for our health & happiness.
- Keeping an eye on the bigger picture. Setbacks make us think only about that moment of struggle. That is when it is most important to remind ourselves how things have actually developed in the long run.



# “Blueberry” On The Cake

THIS IS WHEN YOU ARE  
STRESSED & IN PAIN:



THIS IS WHEN YOU FEEL  
BALANCED & RELAXED:



In stress and in pain, all you can think about is how bad you feel. Your stress and pain keeps you focused inwards. Yet, the better you feel, the easier it is for you to turn your focus outwards. Concentrate on other people and enjoy life around you.

*“This is so great! I can just “forget about myself” and be in this moment with every cell of my being”, I said to my husband when I got this feeling for the first time.*

**So, take time to take care of you first. Over time, you will find you are not only deepening your own wellbeing, yet you’re able to bring it out more to the people around you.**

And that’s the “blueberry” on this cake.



# To know is one thing, To do it is another.

I have enjoyed writing this guide for you. I hope that it has provided value for you too!

The world is full of books and guides. I have noticed that the challenge is not the lack of information, but how to put all the information into practice. How to make our everyday life better in a real way.

**I continue finding ways to increase quality of life naturally.  
You are more than welcome to follow my life in Saimaa!**

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directly to your inbox:

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Lakeland, Finland



Bonus!

## This Is Your Brain In Nature

Click to read this great article that was published in National Geographic. I warmly recommend!

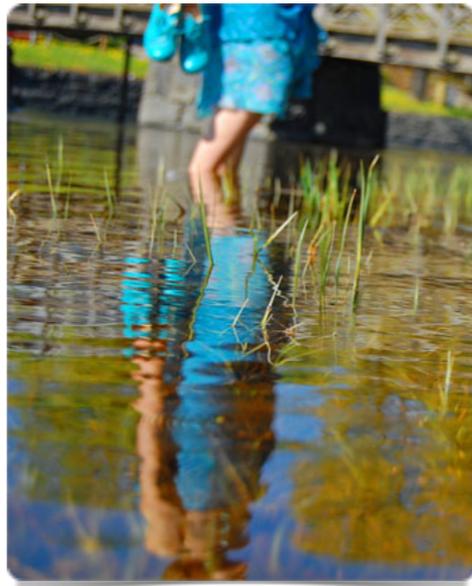
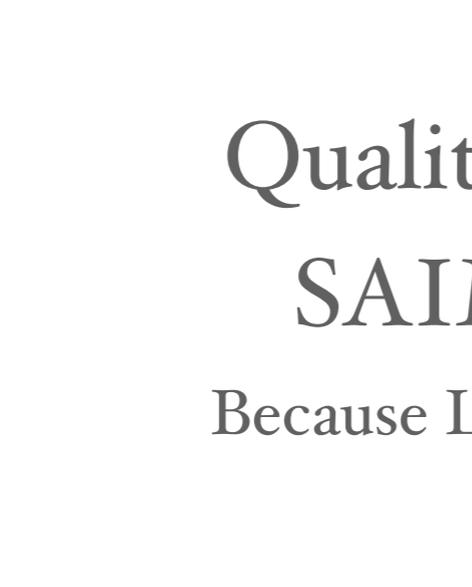
*Naturally, Mari*





*“I only went out for a walk and finally concluded to stay out till  
sundown, for going out,  
I found, was really going in.”*

*-John Muir-*



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