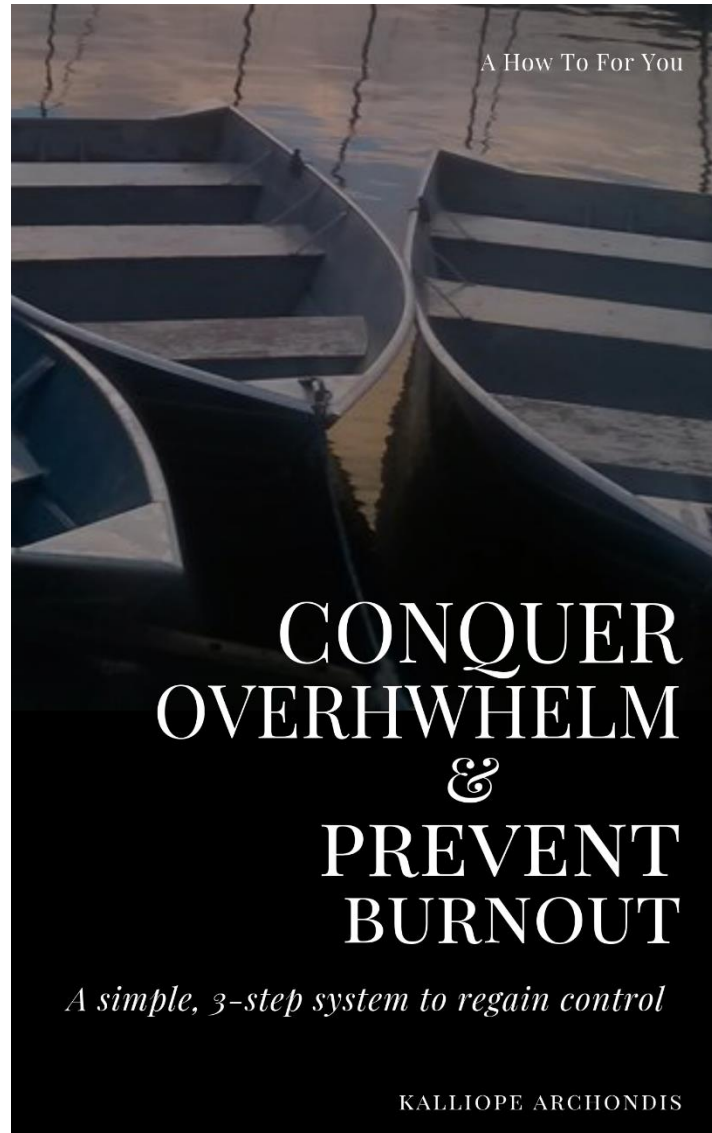


3D Success Survival Guide: **A Simple 3-Step System to** **Conquer Overwhelm and Prevent Burnout**



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AUTHOR'S NOTE

The whole point of this e-book is to help you feel less overwhelmed. So, if at any point you start to get overwhelmed while reading this book or doing the exercises, take a break. You don't need to read it all/do it all now – go at your own pace. It will all be here when you are ready, my friend.

But, I also want you to know that this is not an easy, quick fix, “lose 30 pounds in 30 days” type of solution. Overwhelm – like burnout, anxiety, depression, anger, etc. – is a symptom of a deeper problem that cannot truly be healed with a surface level approach.

That's why this 3-step system requires you to delve into the “real you” to get to the root of the problem. If you're willing to do the work, you will see results!

Finally, everyone is unique. What works for me may not work for you. So, take what works and leave what doesn't. No one knows you and your situation better than you do. This is not meant to be a one-size fits all solution. *Make it yours.*

INTRODUCTION

Good news. You have the power to direct your own life. You *do not* need to be juggling a million different things, running on the hamster wheel of your never ending to-do list, and sacrificing your health to achieve success.

Time is our most precious commodity. It's extremely limited and absolutely non-renewable.

We can't do anything to actually get more time, but there are some simple tactics we can employ to maximize the time that we do have and make the most of it.

You can take back control of your time and your energy. And you can learn to manage your stress levels no matter what life throws at you.

This e-book is designed to not only help you get in the right mindset to conquer overwhelm, but also to give you concrete, actionable strategies to help you stress less and achieve more.

I'm so excited to be here on this journey with you! It is a privilege that I do not take lightly. So, thank you for giving this book a chance, for having an open mind and heart, and for allowing me to pass along my hard-won lessons. I hope they help you as much as they have helped me.

Step 1: Get Organized

Mess causes stress.

Getting organized may seem like a daunting task, especially when you're already feeling overwhelmed. But trust me, it's worth it to take a little time to organize your thoughts and your environment. This will lay the foundation for the next two steps in this 3-step system. Plus, you'll feel better once you do it.

A. PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT

“There are two ways to be rich: One is by acquiring much, and the other is by desiring little.” - Jackie French Koller

Physical clutter competes for our attention, distracts us from what's important and prevents us from getting things done. Do you find it difficult to concentrate when there's too much stuff everywhere? I sure do!

Assess Your Living Space

Go through your living space and see what needs to be decluttered. Don't do anything yet, just take note of the following:

- Problem Area/Item
- Solution
- Estimated Time to Complete
- Priority

This usually ends up taking more time than you think, so always over-estimate the amount of time it will take you to complete each task.

Prioritize Your List

“All we have to decide is what to do with the time that is given us.” - J.R.R. Tolkien, The Fellowship of the Ring

Once you have all the problem areas listed, along with the solutions and time it will take to complete them, then you can decide which ones will take priority.

Assign each one a number from 1 (most important) to 10 (least important). You may have more or less than 10 areas/items, this is just an example.

Use the Clutter Clearing worksheet on page 3 of the Workbook

Examples:

- Problem Area: Kitchen

Solution: Organize cabinets and pantry. Get rid of old, unusable, or undesired items.

Estimated Time to Complete: 4 hours

Priority: 3

- Problem Item: Paperwork

Solution: Get an accordion folder, separate paperwork according to type i.e. taxes, bills, medical, receipts, etc. shred old, unnecessary documents.

Estimated Time to Complete: 2 hours

Priority: 2

Tackle One Area/Item

Start with your number 1 priority.

Take everything out of drawers, cabinets, file folders, or whatever is housing the contents and put it into a big pile.

Separate the pile into three categories:

1. Keep
2. Donate
3. Sell

Be Aggressive

If there is anything you haven't used in a while, get rid of it.

If there is anything that brings back bad memories, get rid of it.

If there is anything broken, stained, cracked, or an unnecessary duplicate, get rid of it!

If you're on the fence about something, try not to spend a lot of time thinking about it. Move on and don't let it derail you from the task at hand. Put the item aside and make your final decision at the end of your decluttering session.

Implement Systems

Once everything is decluttered, organize the remaining items. Label things accordingly and make them accessible.

It's important to implement systems that will help you to maintain your clear space so that the clutter does not reaccumulate in the future.

For example, if you notice that you drop your keys, mail, change, and anything else in your pockets on the table when

you come home, set up receptacles for those items – a key ring, a mail holder, a piggy bank, etc.

Take Your Time

“Little by little, a little becomes a lot.” – Tanzanian proverb

Follow this system for all the spaces in your home. Choose *just one* area/item to tackle per day, that way you don’t get overwhelmed.

The secret to organizing your space or reaching any big goal in life is to do little by little.

Whatever it is, break it down into its constituent parts. Then, each little task doesn’t seem so daunting and you are able to complete them without getting so stressed out that you quit. By the time you finish all the little, manageable tasks, you have completed your big goal!

Decluttering Tips:

- **Make it fun:** Set the right mood by playing some music, putting on a movie, lighting some candles, or anything else that makes you happy.
- **Set a time limit:** It helps to know that the task is only temporary. Setting a time limit for each room, item, etc. is a great way to prevent yourself from doing too much at once and getting overwhelmed.
- **Reward yourself:** After you’ve completed your clutter-clearing task for the day, give yourself a small reward. It will give you the psychological boost of motivation you need to keep going.

B. MENTAL CLUTTER

Your mind, like your physical environment, can become cluttered with too much stuff.

If you feel like you've always got a million thoughts and ideas running through your head ...

Like the endless list of to-do's streaming through your brain is driving you crazy ...

Like you can't fall asleep because your brain just won't shut off ...

You need to do a brain dump!

A brain dump is the process of transferring information from your brain onto a piece of paper (or several).

Brain Dump Benefits

Just like with physical decluttering, the point of mental decluttering is to get everything out in the open so you can see what you're working with. From there, you can prioritize, declutter, organize, and set goals.

The main benefit of the brain dump is that it reduces overwhelm. However, there are many other benefits, including:

- when you're done, you have an organized list of all the things you need to do and all the things you *think* you need to do
- it makes it easier to prioritize tasks, set goals and face whatever's been on your mind
- it forces you to tackle those nagging things that never seem to get done
- you're able to more clearly see what's actionable versus what's out of your control

How to Do It

Go to the Brain Dump Worksheets on pages 4-15 of the Workbook.

You can print out the worksheets and fill them out by hand or you can type in your answers on the computer. You could also record yourself speaking your answers if you prefer.

I don't know about you, but I find something particularly cathartic about the process of putting pen to paper. I like to follow this three-step process for my brain dumps:

1. Free-Write

Write everything down.

Everything that's on your mind, all the things on your mental to-do list, all the things you think you should do or have been meaning to do, *everything*.

Just get it all out. Don't try to censor it at this stage. Write whatever comes to mind. You can always go back and edit it later.

Example:

"Organize office, declutter closet, write blog post, research ideas for next blog post, send thank you card, call about house, book idea, networking- reach out to other bloggers, comment on blogs, be more involved on social media, create pins, exercise & meditate more, dentist appointment ..."

2. Organize by Category

Next, organize everything by category and give each category a color.

The types of categories you will have depends on what you wrote during your free-write.

Example:

- Appointments
- Errands
- Goals
- Health
- Home Organizing
- Responsibilities/Obligations/Commitments
- Self-Improvement
- Thoughts
- Work

Productivity experts suggest completing tasks that will only take a couple of minutes first to clear up brain space and energy for other, bigger tasks.

So, one category I like to include is “Two-Minute Tasks”. If something will only take you two minutes to complete, just get it out of the way now so you don’t have to worry about it anymore!

Another category I like to include is “Procrastination Station”. This is where you can write down anything you’ve been putting off, anything that seems like it never gets done.

Is there something you’ve been meaning to do for a while? Someone you’ve been meaning to reach out to? List it under this category.

3. Clean Up Your List

Finally, it's time to clean up that list so you can focus on the right things.

Notice what is out of your control versus what is in your control.

Cross off the things that are out of your control – *there is literally nothing you can do about them.*

Also, cross off the two-minute tasks as you complete them. These small wins will give you a boost of motivation to tackle the other, bigger tasks.

Next, cross off the things that you feel need no further attention. Sometimes, just writing things down is enough to make you feel better about them. Not everything requires action.

Now, you should be left with an organized list of things that you can address one at a time.

Use the Brain Dump worksheets on pages 4-15 of the Workbook

Step 2: Get Motivated

Now that you're organized, you need to focus your energy on the right things – what's most important to you.

Not to anyone else, but to *you*.

When you know what you're fighting for, it's easier (and less stressful) to work towards it while letting the extraneous stuff go. Internal motivation transforms “having to” into “wanting to” – which makes all the difference in the world.

A. WHAT'S YOUR “WHY”?

“He who has a why can endure any how.” - Friedrich Nietzsche

If you feel like you've got too much going on, you must decide what's truly important and what you can let go of.

You're a human being, not a robot.

Remember, you are the steward of your time. You get to decide which things deserve your most precious resource and which don't.

Since you're a high achiever, you probably think you couldn't possibly get rid of *any* of the things on your plate.

But, this is simply not true.

If *everything* is important, then what's really important? "Important" loses meaning.

If you try to cater to everyone, you wind up pleasing no one. If you try to do everything, you wind up accomplishing nothing.

So, to make sure the right things actually get done, rank everything on your list in order of importance to you.

In order to do this, however, you must first know *who you are and what you want to accomplish*.

What's Your Definition of Success?

Not your partner's, or your parents' or society's – yours.

Success was defined for me from a young age. You may have been given a similar definition:

Get an education + get a good job that pays well (with benefits) + work hard and move up the ladder + make lots of money = Success.

While this is a perfectly acceptable opinion, it just isn't for everyone.

It certainly wasn't for me.

Set aside the traditional definition of success – money, power, position – and think about what success means to you personally.

Maybe it's:

- having close, supportive relationships
- being able to spend time with your children
- helping others/charity/philanthropy
- accomplishing your goals
- being respected/viewed as an authority in your niche
- happiness/inner peace
- having time to go on vacation
- being able to look back on your life with pride
- doing what you love every day
- being a good spouse/parent
- fulfilling your purpose
- leaving a legacy

So, what does your vision of success look like?

Ultimately, why do you do everything you do? *What's your why?*

If you're not sure, it's time to do some soul searching.

Use the Know Yourself worksheets on pages 16-17 of the Workbook

How to Discover Your Passion/Purpose (Your “Why”)

“The truth is that as a man's real power grows and his knowledge widens, ever the way he can follow grows narrower: until at last he chooses nothing but does only and wholly what he must do.” - Ursula K. Le Guin, A Wizard of Earthsea

You must know your “why” so that you can decide which things you should and shouldn’t be burdening yourself with. Narrowing your focus in this way will help you to feel less overwhelmed.

Anything that doesn’t advance your why shouldn’t be cluttering up your mind or your schedule.

Who you are and what you want to accomplish will direct many of your life decisions: where you live, with whom you associate, what you choose to do with your time, etc.

If you’re unsure, here are some tips to help you dig deep:

1. Ask Yourself Insightful Questions

Asking yourself some insightful questions can help you determine what’s really important to you.

- What would you do if money were no object?
- What would you do if you knew you could not fail?
- If you had one year left to live, what would you do?
- How do you want to be remembered? What would you want people to say about you at your funeral?
- What are your core values?

Use the 71 Insightful Questions on pages 18-26 of the Workbook
&
100 Core Values on pages 27-31 of the Workbook

2. Notice When You’re in the Flow

Have you ever been so engrossed in something that you forgot to eat or take a break?

Maybe you were doing art or playing a sport or gardening.

Time seemed to stop – or pass so quickly – that you didn’t realize you’d been absorbed for so long.

Hours passed before you even looked up and yet you didn't feel tired, you felt *happy*.

That's called "flow", a term coined by psychologist, Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi. (*Flow: The Psychology of Optimal Experience*, Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi, 1990)

This state of consciousness brings deep enjoyment because it strikes the perfect balance between challenge and success.

Notice when you are in the zone. It can clue you in on what brings you joy, what you are good at – and what your "why" is.

3. Reflect Upon Your Childhood

What did you dream of doing when you were a child? Who did you want to be when you grew up? How did you envision your life?

Reflecting upon your childhood can give you some valuable insights into what you should focus on as an adult.

Children tend to be unencumbered by life's responsibilities and uninhibited by self-consciousness.

They are free to explore the world and do things out of genuine interest rather than practical obligation.

They haven't had enough time or life experience to become jaded by failures, rejections and betrayals. They truly believe anything is possible.

So, think back to a time when you were unapologetically you. A time when you believed anything was possible.

- What did you love to do?
- What was it about those things that interested you?

The answers to these questions can help you determine your why because: *play* → *passion* → *purpose*.

Use the Childhood Reflections worksheet on page 32 of the Workbook

B. DO LESS, ACHIEVE MORE

“If you don’t know where you are going, you will probably end up somewhere else.” –Lawrence J. Peter

Now that you have your prioritized list and you know your why, it’s time to choose which important, beneficial things you’ll focus on (and decide which time-sucking activities will be slashed from your schedule).

One Goal at a Time

Only focus on ONE big goal at a time.

This not only reduces overwhelm but also makes you much more likely to reach your goal.

So, think about what you want the most, what would make the biggest difference in your life. And only focus on that.

Our brains are not wired to multitask.

So, even though it makes sense to think that doing lots of things at once is a great way to be efficient, it’s actually counter-productive.

If you have a habit of setting multiple goals for yourself and then never accomplishing them even though you are constantly busy, try focusing on *only one* goal at a time. You’ll be amazed how much it will skyrocket your productivity!

And as for that one goal, don’t be afraid to dream big.

What’s Your BHAG?

“Shoot for the moon. Even if you miss, you’ll land among the stars.” –Les Brown

BHAG (*pronounced bee-hag*) stands for Big, Hairy, Audacious Goal.

It is a term coined by two Stanford professors who studied some of the most successful companies to see what they did differently from the rest. (Source: *Built to Last: Successful Habits of Visionary Companies*, Jim Collins & Jerry Porras, 1994)

The professors discovered that the one thing all the companies had in common was that they set big, scary, long-term goals that aligned with their purpose.

I think this concept can be applied to personal goals as well. If you're a reader of my blog, you know I believe in living your life by design, not by default.

One way to do that is by setting a personal BHAG.

Examples of BHAGs:

Amazon: Our vision is to be earth's most customer centric company; to build a place where people can come to find and discover anything they might want to buy online.

McDonald's: To be the world's best quick service restaurant experience. Being the best means providing outstanding quality, service, cleanliness, and value, so that we make every customer in every restaurant smile.

Google: To organize the world's information and make it universally accessible and useful.

DuPont: To be the world's most dynamic science company, creating sustainable solutions essential to a better, safer, and healthier life for people everywhere.

General Electric: To become #1 or #2 in every market we serve and revolutionize this company to have the speed and agility of a small enterprise.

(Source: <https://www.dummies.com/business/business-strategy/examples-of-big-hairy-audacious-vision-statements/>)

1. Chunk Down Your Goal

“The journey of a thousand miles begins with one step.” -Lao Tzu

How do you eat an elephant? One bite at a time.

Take on your BHAG little by little, just like we did with decluttering.

Chunk it down.

After all, a big goal is really just a bunch of little goals.

So, break your BHAG down into its constituent parts.

What will it take for you to accomplish it, step by step?

Chunk your big goal down into medium-sized goals. Then, chunk those medium goals down even further to small goals. And finally, chunk those small goals down until you have *one thing* you can do right now to get you one step closer to your goal.

Example of Chunking:

BHAG: Quit my job and be my own boss as a full-time blogger.

Chunks (medium goals you must accomplish in order to achieve the large goal):

* Advertising Disclosure: I am a Bluehost affiliate so if you click on the link below and make a purchase, I will earn a commission. *

- [Get domain & hosting](#)
- Write & publish blog posts
- Market content
- Create product/Offer services

Continue to chunk the medium goals down into small goals that you can do right now.

For example, let's take one of the chunks –

Get domain & hosting.

To do that, you will first need to:

- Small goal #1: Research hosting providers
- Small goal #2: Do keyword/niche research
- Small goal #3: Come up with a domain name & check for availability

2. Set SMART Mini-Goals

Keep in mind that you are more likely to achieve goals that are:

Specific- is it detailed and specific?

Measurable- will you be able to track your progress?

Attainable- is it attainable, given your available resources?

Relevant- it is relevant to your “why”?

Time-Bound- by when will you achieve it?

(“SMART goals”- Source: Management Review, *There's a SMART Way to Write Management's Goals and Objectives*, George T. Duran, 1981)

Examples of SMART Goals:

- You want to: Lose weight.

SMART goal: Lose 8 pounds in 2 months (approximately 1 pound a week) by eating healthy, walking for an hour a day and doing yoga 5 times a week.

- You want to: Make more money.

SMART goal: Start a side hustle (freelance writing, blogging, selling crafts on Etsy, affiliate promotion, driving for Uber, etc.) that will allow me to make an extra \$250-\$500 a month.

- You want to: Be debt free.

SMART goal: Save an extra \$100 a month to pay off my credit card with the highest interest rate so that the balance of \$1,000 is paid off in 10 months.

- You want to: Get more blog traffic.

SMART goal: Drive 10% more organic traffic to my blog through the following marketing efforts: creating at least 5 new pins for my posts per week, optimizing posts for SEO, and participating in Facebook groups.

Use the Goals worksheets on pages 33-37 of the Workbook

3. Eliminate Distractions

Nothing kills your productivity (and spikes your stress levels) like distractions.

I didn't realize the extent that technology and social media stressed me out until I did seasonal work stints for in places where there was no internet or TV – hence, my inadvertent three-month digital detox!

Technology is one of the largest contributors to overwhelm. The state of “constant checking” keeps us on edge and in a state of hyperarousal.

I remember a time when there were no cell phones and if someone wanted to reach you when you weren't home, they had to leave a message on the answering machine.

Then, you could just get back to them when you were ready. When you weren't busy doing other things like *living your life*.

But nowadays everyone expects instantaneous responses.

Text, Instagram, Facebook, email on smartphones – all these distractions create urgency and contribute to overwhelm.

I realize that for many of us, it's not feasible to completely get rid of technology, social media, etc.

But, it is possible for us to do a digital detox every now and then. You don't have to do it for days or months on end. You can simply cut back here and there. Set certain times when you won't be using technology, such as:

- Upon waking up
- A few hours before bed
- During mealtimes
- Over the weekend
- While you're on vacation
- During workouts
- On certain days of the week

If you don't know exactly how much time you are spending on social media or watching TV, try tracking your usage for a day or two.

You might be surprised how much time and attention these things are really taking away from things that are more important to you ... and how much it's been stressing you out!

Use the Social Media Usage Tracker on page 38 of the Workbook

Step 3: Get Resilient

“In one and the same fire, clay grows hard and wax melts.” – Sir Francis Bacon

Protect yourself from getting overwhelmed to begin with.

It's just as important to have strategies in place to cope with overwhelm as it is to prevent yourself from becoming overwhelmed in the future. To do so, you must build your resiliency. Fortifying your mindset and having habits and systems in place are the best ways to shield yourself against overwhelming stress.

A. YOUR MINDSET

“With our thoughts, we make our world.” - Buddha

The very definition of “overwhelm” provides us with some valuable insight on how to conquer it. Let's take a look at what it means to overwhelm someone/something:

- bury or drown beneath a huge mass
- defeat completely
- give too much of a thing to someone; inundate
- have a strong emotional effect on
- be too strong for; overpower

Now, look at the underlined words.

Buried. Defeated. Overpowered. Are these the words you want to use to describe yourself or your situation?

Of course not!

Thankfully, you're in control.

Overwhelm is subjective. What being overwhelmed feels like, what it takes to reach the point of feeling overwhelmed, how overwhelm manifests ... these things all depend on the person who is going through it.

So, the trick to conquering overwhelm isn't necessarily avoiding things, it's *changing your perception of those things*.

Overwhelm does not come from our circumstances, but rather from our perception of those circumstances.

So, if you're a high-achiever who sets impossible standards for yourself and then gets disappointed when you don't live up to them, it's time to challenge your perceptions and beliefs.

Otherwise, life will keep "getting in the way", there will never seem like there's enough time, and you will keep getting overwhelmed.

Your perceptions, beliefs and mindset all determine *whether you will allow yourself* to be buried, defeated, and overpowered.

1. Your Perception Creates Your Reality

"The meaning of things lies not in the things themselves, but in our attitude towards them." - Antoine de Saint-Exupery, The Little Prince

You can't necessarily control what happens to you but you can control how you feel about it, what it means to you, and how you react to it.

Experience → Perception → Reaction → (Subjective) Reality

The same tragic event can befall two people and each of those people go on to live very different lives based on the way they perceive what happened.

This concept reminds me of an inspiring TED Talk about a woman who struggled with anxiety her whole life. She tried everything – counseling, medication, hypnosis – and none of it worked.

That woman eventually went on to accomplish brave pursuits like skydiving, astronaut training, and completing a triathlon.

How did she manage to do that?

By changing her perception.

She started re-framing anxiety as adventure. She embraced her fears and the feeling of being terrified. Now, she uses fear as fuel for success. You can bet she lives a very different life than she would have if she had let her anxiety take over.

The power of perception is so strong that it can literally shape your life and change your reality.

Your perceptions influence your thoughts, which influence your beliefs, which influence your actions, which create your reality.

“When you change the way you look at things, the things you look at change.” – Max Planck, Nobel Prize recipient (physics).

Look for the Good & Accept What’s Out of Your Control

Things don’t always go as planned. As the saying goes, *“the best-laid plans often go awry”*.

No matter how much we plan and prepare, unforeseeable circumstances can make things go differently than expected.

And that’s a good thing!

I don’t have all the answers. None of us do. We’re all just doing the best we can with what we’ve got. We don’t always know why things happen the way they do or how they will affect us in the future.

Maybe what you wanted wasn’t what was best for you after all. Maybe you didn’t get something good because you were meant to have something great.

All you can do is accept the circumstances you find yourself in and evaluate your options from there.

I'm sure you can remember a time when you were so disappointed because something didn't go your way only to later realize just how fortuitous that "failure" really was. Save yourself a lot of stress by trusting that everything will work out for the best, even if you can't see what that is right now.

Recognizing and surrendering to what's out of your control allows you to release the stress associated it.

When you accept that something is out of your control, you're able to detach yourself from your immediate self-interest and look for the silver lining in the situation – perhaps a life lesson, a reminder of something to be grateful for, or the strengthening of your fortitude.

When you look for the good (or the bad, for that matter) in situations, you will find it. When you focus on that goodness, it will grow and become easier to spot the next time.

Allow yourself to conquer overwhelming stress by simply *changing the way you look at it*. It's truly all in your mind.

2. Which Limiting Beliefs are Holding You Back?

Your thoughts are not facts.

When I read that for the first time, it blew my mind and led to a huge paradigm shift!

It's true - your thoughts are not always a reflection of the truth.

You can challenge them and change them. You do not have to accept them "as is" and they do not have to define you.

Our brains are moldable. They can be rewired through environmental stimuli as well as through our:

- Thoughts
- Emotions
- Behaviors

Thanks to neuroplasticity (the brain's ability to change continuously throughout our lives), we can literally program ourselves for success. The way we think about stressful situations and our internal dialogue regarding them have a lot to do with the outcomes.

Usually, we're not even aware of our own limiting beliefs because they typically develop over time as our brain's (sometimes misguided) way of making sense of everything that happens to us.

We are constantly being bombarded with more information than our brains can handle. Our brains, wired to make sense of things and present us with solutions, are forced to take mental shortcuts to process it all.

These mental shortcuts – otherwise known as *heuristics* – allow us to make decisions or solve problems based on the information we have available to us.

Sometimes, we don't really have enough information to draw a sound conclusion. But that doesn't stop our brains from using what little information we *do* have to make assumptions and draw a conclusion anyway.

Great for efficiency, not so great for accuracy.

Heuristics can trick us into thinking that:

- because something happened in the past means it will happen again
- because something happened more than once means it will always happen that way

- because you can think of an example of something, it is common/frequently occurring

Over time, these hastily-made and unsupported assumptions can solidify into limiting beliefs that do nothing but hold you back.

Thankfully, you have the power to stop standing in your own way.

3. Change Your Self-Sabotaging Thoughts and Beliefs

Start by noticing your negative thoughts. They typically include words like “not”, “don’t”, “can’t”, “always” or “never”.

Challenge them and replace them with positive messages that serve you. *Remember: your thoughts are not facts.*

In what areas of your life might you have limiting beliefs that are preventing you from achieving your definition of success?

- Love
- Money
- Pursuing your dreams
- Relationships
- Self-worth
- Spirituality
- Trust
- Work

Examples of Limiting Beliefs:

- “I can’t handle it”
- “I’m not good enough”
- “That’s just the way the world works”
- “I’ll never be successful/rich/happy”
- “There’s not enough for everyone”
- “I don’t have enough time”
- “I don’t deserve happiness”
- “I have too many responsibilities”

- “My successes are a result of luck”
- “You have to work hard to make money”
- “Self-care is selfish”
- “I’m too young/old/stupid/poor to do that”
- “I don’t know where to start”
- “If I don’t keep it all up, I’m a failure”
- “I don’t deserve nice things”
- “Change is just too hard”
- “It’s irresponsible to chase my dreams”
- “I’m powerless to change my situation”

Examine your beliefs regarding your responsibilities, lifestyle, goals, and level of self-efficacy.

Replace the limiting beliefs that are no longer serving you with empowering beliefs that will help you to achieve your definition of success.

It’s amazing how much weight is lifted off your shoulders when you’re not fighting against yourself!

An effective way to do this is by repeating empowering affirmations. This will train your subconscious to accept your new beliefs.

As you build mental strength through your subconscious, the empowering affirmations will take the place of the limiting beliefs that once held you back.

Over time, your brain will oust the limiting beliefs, accepting your new empowering affirmations as the truth.

Use the Limiting Beliefs to Empowering Beliefs on pages 39-42 of the
Workbook

B. HABITS & SYSTEMS

“We are what we repeatedly do. Excellence, then, is not an act but a habit.” - Aristotle

So far, we’ve discussed strategies for dealing with overwhelm.

But, like pain, it’s better to prevent it from happening in the first place than to try to mitigate it once it starts!

Thankfully, there are ways to fortify yourself against future overwhelm and burnout. Having habits and systems in place will go a long way towards shielding you from overwhelming stress.

The brain dump process is something I do regularly to prevent myself from getting overwhelmed. Other habits and systems I’ve implemented include:

1. Expressing gratitude

I find that every so often, it helps to take a step back and keep things in perspective.

When you recognize all the wonderful, miraculous things you have to be grateful for, somehow the giant, insurmountable problems you were so stressed about don’t seem quite as cataclysmic.

For example, scientists have estimated your odds of existing at one in 400 trillion or more.

It’s so improbable for you to even be here that it’s practically impossible.

And yet, here you are!

There is and will never be anyone else exactly like you.

You have been given the greatest, rarest, most precious gift – life.

As hard as it gets (and it can get *extremely* hard, believe me I know), there are many other things to be grateful for as well if you just stop to reflect.

Regularly taking a moment to reflect and express gratitude for those little things trains your brain to be more optimistic strengthens your emotional resiliency. Building up this optimism and emotional resiliency will help you to cope with stress in the future.

Use the Gratitude Prompts & Exercises on pages 43-46 of the Workbook

2. Meditating

Anxiety tends to be a past or future-based emotion ... worrying about what will happen or what did happen.

Meditation is effective tool for staying present and maintaining a sense of calm.

By staying focused on the present moment, you allow yourself to release the worry associated with the past or the future.

Meditating not only calms you down in the moment but also builds up your resiliency to stress.

Seated meditation is not the only kind there is, so if that hasn't worked for you in the past, give another form a try, like walking meditation. As you walk, try to release your thoughts and focus on your breathing and your surroundings.

Another form of meditation that helps with overwhelm is shower meditation.

Hydrotherapy goes way back to the ancient Greeks. A recent study even found that water baths were more effective than drugs in treating generalized anxiety disorder!

Next time you bathe, try doing a cleansing meditation. As the water cleanses your body, imagine it is also washing away your worries and cleansing your mind. Imagine the soap washing all your stress and negativity down the drain.

Since showering is something most of us already do every day, or at least a few times a week, this is an easy anti-overwhelm habit to incorporate into your routine.

3. Eating healthy

Food and mood are very much connected.

What you eat or don't eat has an effect on how you feel and how your body functions.

When you give your body the nutrients it needs to function properly, you are better equipped to deal with life's stressors. But, when you feed it junk, you are depriving yourself, making it more difficult for you to cope.

Build your resilience to stress by feeding yourself the right kind of foods. The kind of fuel you are running on determines how you run.

A diet high in vitamins, minerals and antioxidants nourishes the brain while a diet high in processed foods and refined sugars harms it.

Some nutrients associated with brain health include:

- Amino acids
- B-12
- Choline
- Folate
- Iron
- Magnesium

- Omega-3 fatty acids
- Vitamin D
- Zinc

Use the Foods that Reduce Stress on pages 47-49

&

Foods that Increase Stress on pages 50-52 of the Workbook

4. Exercising & spending time in nature

When you are stressed, your body goes into fight or flight mode.

It releases hormones like cortisol and adrenaline to help you get through the stressful situation alive.

If you don't exhaust these hormones or you are in a constant state of stress, they can put you at risk for anxiety, depression, digestive problems, and other health-related issues.

One way to burn through those harmful hormone reserves is by exercising. Exercising also boosts endorphins – your body's natural pain-relieving, mood-boosting, stress-reducing chemicals.

If possible, exercise outside, or at least spend some time in nature every day. The benefits of fresh air, sunlight and natural scenery for mental health have been scientifically proven time and time again.

5. Getting enough sleep

Lack of sleep can make you moody, impulsive, overreactive, and emotional.

It's important that your body be allowed the time it needs to perform its detoxifying, relaxing, reparative processes.

But, when you're overwhelmed it can be difficult to fall asleep. Here are some tips to help you put an end to sleepless nights:

- Avoid alcohol, which tends to make sleep lighter and more interrupted
- Avoid caffeine at least a few hours before bed
- Breathe deep and rhythmically
- Dim the lights when it gets close to bedtime
- Do progressive muscle relaxation (consciously tense and release each part of your body)
- Do something to wind down like reading a book or journaling
- Don't watch TV or do work in the bedroom
- If you can't fall asleep within half an hour, get up and do something in another room before trying to fall asleep again
- Take a warm bath or shower before bed
- Try aromatherapy – lavender, bergamot and chamomile are all good choices
- Turn off/put away all technology at least an hour before bed

6. Capitalizing on your strengths & resources

None of us function at a “10” all day, every day.

Sometimes, we are more productive, we have more energy and we are more motivated than others.

Capitalize on these times of peak productivity.

Notice when you operate at your best and do your most difficult, important work then. That way, you are working with your body's natural rhythm to maximize your productivity.

Research suggests that most people are productive between the hours of 9 and 11 am and least productive around 3pm, but everyone is different.

I work best in the early morning hours, so I tackle my most daunting tasks during that time.

If you're not sure when you're at your most productive, pay attention to your productivity and motivation levels throughout the day for a few days.

When do you feel like you're firing on all cylinders? When do you notice yourself hitting a slump?

Then, do the tasks that require the most concentration, the ones that are the most important and/or the most difficult during your hours of peak productivity. Save the more routine, mundane tasks for the "slumps".

7. Breathing & doing nothing

Having lots of things vying for your attention is a part of life nowadays. But this perpetual state of busyness is not healthy.

Constantly having a million things going on and leaving yourself no time to unwind is a surefire recipe for burnout.

Leave yourself time to do nothing. Just breathe.

A lot of times we don't realize that we are shallow breathing. Shallow breathing can lead to anxiety and panic attacks and does nothing but make you feel more overwhelmed.

The imbalance of oxygen and carbon dioxide can also cause other side effects like increased pain, insomnia and fatigue.

Practice slowing your breathing down and taking deep breaths.

Calming your parasympathetic nervous system down in this way will also calm you down mentally and help to prevent you from getting overwhelmed.

Use the Deep Breathing Exercises on pages 53-55 of the Workbook

A Final Note: Stop Trying to Be Perfect

"Smile, breathe and go slowly." -Thich Nhat Hanh

You can do this!

You are now armed with strategies to both reduce overwhelm when it strikes and prevent yourself from getting overwhelmed to begin with.

As you progress on your journey, it's important to remember that we're aiming for progress, not perfection.

Perfection is an unattainable concept. As humans, we are all flawed, we all make mistakes, and we all fail.

There will always be someone better (and worse) than you at any given thing.

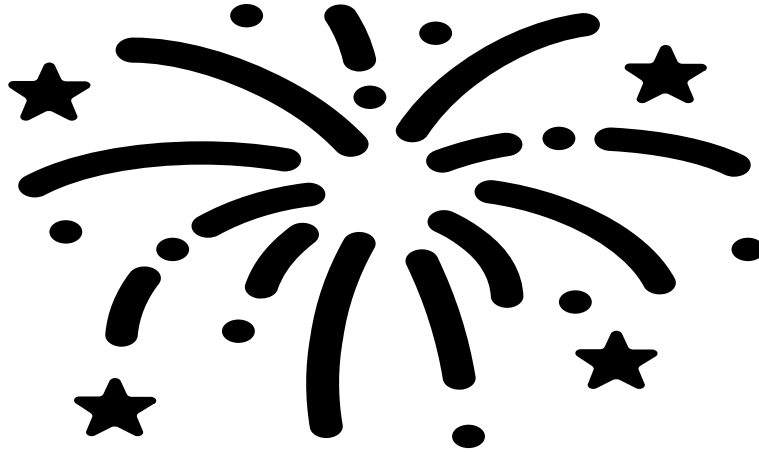
Your 50% could be equivalent to someone else's 100% and vice versa.

You don't have to do anything or prove anything to anyone to be worthy. You already are – no matter what.

So, stop trying to be "perfect" – there is no such objective truth.

There is only your best. And it's good enough.

CONGRATULATIONS!



You've reached the end of this e-book. Please let me know if you found it helpful or if you have any questions.

I can be reached at **kalli@3dsuccess.org**.

Wishing you health, happiness & success,

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