



Moms Get Real™
New Year New You
2012

TABLE OF CONTENTS

[About MomsGetReal](#)

[Daily Inspiration for Happiness from Diana Fletcher](#)

[Deal Your Way To Better Health with FitDeck](#)

[Find Inner Peace With Meditation Moods with Dean & Dudley Evenson](#)

[Getting To Know Yourself Better To Achieve Your Desires](#)

[A Healthier You Through the Magnesium Miracle?](#)

[Hiring a Babysitter – Tips from the Pros at Care4Hire.com](#)

[Improving Your Financial Health](#)

[The Nature of Women – Inspired Understanding](#)

[New Mommy Makeover For a Fit & Firmer You...Not Just for New Mommies!](#)

[No Excuses – With Care4Hire, You Have Time for You](#)

[Sit Stretch Smile Your Way to a New You](#)

[Tackling Life's Stresses Naturally with Mae's Healing Guidance](#)

The Nature of Women – Inspired Understanding

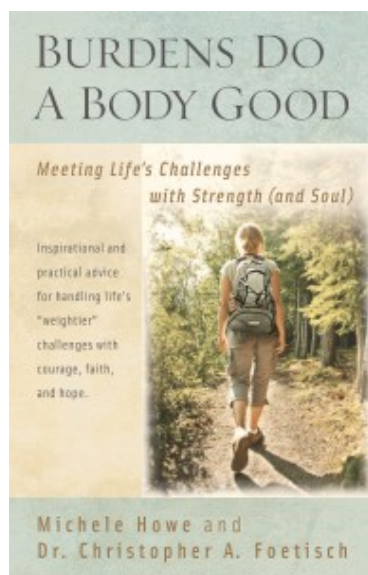
I've been gearing up for what I planned to be THE BIGGEST EVENT OF THE YEAR on MomsGetReal. And then my daughter came home from college for Christmas break. And then my son, who has not been home for three years, came home from the Army for a couple of weeks. And then the younger kids went on break from school. And then, I got sick. I'm still trying to decide if the antibiotics are slow-moving or if the lung is just determined to cough its way out of my body.

So my big plans to have a NEW YEAR, NEW ME have gone all awry. Instead of losing more weight, I gained some back. Instead of spending extra time with the kids, I learned that adult children don't mind coming home to eat your food and mooch for a while but really don't care to spend time with parents. And, thanks to a long lasting cold-turned-bronchitis, I have been less than my usual productive self, with a list of to-dos that keeps piling up.

I could quite easily become depressed, stressed, and uber pressured. I *was* going to start skipping my carefully carved out exercise time that I've just recently reclaimed to make up for my slow start. I was feeling like I was drowning, or failing, or both.

But right now, I'm feeling ok. A good reason for why I'm feeling ok is that I am reading a book that has managed to penetrate my often too-stubborn to hear what's good for me skull and have an impact.

And, I think that EVERY WOMAN SHOULD READ the book too. This year – no – this MONTH.



BURDENS DO A BODY GOOD: Meeting Life's Challenges with Strength (and Soul) by Michele Howe and Dr. Christopher A. Foetisch.

Michele Howe writes with compassion and understanding. She doesn't preach or set unrealistic high expectations. She simply recognizes the many challenges women face in the way they move through life and the world, internalizing problems, sacrificing their well-being for the good of others, and sometimes falling into depression, hopelessness, or resentment because of it.

Reading her book has lifted my spirits, helped me let go of my stress, and allowed me to forgive my own imperfections, of which there are many.

Each chapter of the book covers a different "burden," from the everyday small things like having to wait longer than expected for an appointment to the bigger-than-life things like

losing a loved one. Each burden is acknowledged and embraced, and then Howe provides solid takeaways and positive ideas women can use to survive and thrive. In addition, Howe's co-author, Dr. Foetisch provides medical perspective, advice, and reasoning for the burdens women experience and work through.

I am personally grateful that Michele Howe asked me to include her book in our New Year, New You event. Not only has reading it been a comfort to me but I am confident that women of all ages and faiths will find inspiration within its pages.

The book is available on [Amazon](#) as well as [Kindle](#).

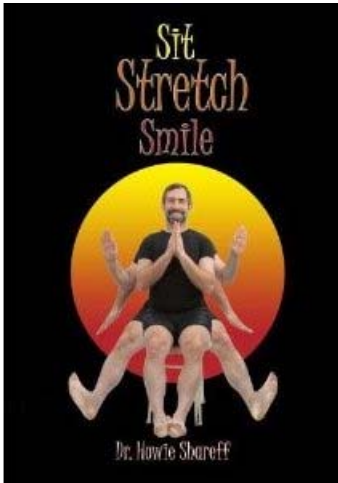


Michele Howe is the author of eleven books for women. Her book, *“Going It Alone: Meeting the Challenges of Being a Single Mom”* (Hendrickson Publishers), provided hope and practical helps for single moms new to parenting solo. She has also authored *“Pilgrim Prayers for Single Mothers”* (Pilgrim Press) and a third book of helps for single mothers titled, *“Successful Single Moms”* (Pilgrim Press.) In addition to these resources for single mothers, Michele wrote four separate titles combining real life stories with inspirational prayer retreats. These titles published by (Jossey-Bass) include: *“Prayers for Homeschooling Moms,” “Prayers to Nourish a Woman’s Heart,” “Prayers of Comfort and Strength”* and *“Prayers for New and Expecting Moms.”*

Her newest books include a follow-up resource to *“Going It Alone”* titled, *“Still Going It Alone: Mothering with Faith and Finesse Once the Children Have Grown”* (Hendrickson Publishers).

“Burdens Do a Body Good: Meeting Life’s Challenges with Strength and Soul” co-authored with orthopedic surgeon, Dr. Christopher A. Foetisch (Hendrickson Publishers). Just published, *“Prescription for Life: Making Meaningful Choices, Building a Healthy Life”* also co-authored with Dr. Foetisch and upon which Michele bases her new weekly radio health segment of the same name.

Sit Stretch Smile Your Way to a New You



Yoga intimidates me. Snug, revealing clothing. On the floor in positions that I haven't been able to do since I was 20. Ridiculous need for flexibility.

Yet Yoga draws me, too. The peace and tranquility that are associated with the practice. The increased flexibility and mental clarity that come from it.

But you won't find me heading to a studio anytime soon to humiliate myself in front of the "skinny" girls. No way.

Thankfully, Dr. Howie Shareff came along and created Sit Stretch Smile, allowing me to experience Yoga not only from the relative comfort of my own home.

Not only is it Yoga for true beginner, but it is Yoga that can be done from a chair – a much less intimidating prospect than the floor pretzel.

Sit Stretch Smile by Dr. Howie Shareff is a clearly written, easy to understand and follow book about learning Yoga exercises that improve your health and flexibility, help you manage pain, and achieve a less-stressed state – from a chair. All of the exercises are designed to be done from a chair, with a serious focus on breathing and slow, conscious movements.

The book is accompanied by a DVD in which many exercises are clearly demonstrated from a variety of views, making it easy to ensure that you're maintaining the right posture and performing the exercises adequately.

No one disputes the value of Yoga as a form of meditative exercise that improves the mind, the body, and the spirit. Dr. Shareff simply makes Yoga accessible to those of us who, for whatever reason, have been less than willing to embrace the benefits Yoga offers. From the privacy of your own home, with the only prop being a chair that lets you put your feet flat on the ground, you can now experience the fabulous benefits of Yoga yourself.

Dr. Shareff achieved certification as a Lakshmi Voelker Chair Yoga Teacher in 2008. He's advancing his studies under the mentorship of Cindy Bulka at Moving Mantra Yoga Studio in Raleigh, N.C. In 2010, Dr. Shareff re-established his business as the non-profit organization, You Call This Yoga, to facilitate public education of the benefits and practice of gentle Adaptive Yoga programs. In 2011, Howie received Level 1 certification as a Restorative Yoga Teacher from Judith Lasater RYT, PT. For more information about Dr. Shareff and to purchase his books and materials, please visit his [website](#).

Tackling Life's Stresses Naturally with Mae's Healing Guidance

Are you ignoring your body talk?



The body, according to Marjorie Mae, is trying to tell us something. It's determining what that something is that helps us make better choices in living healthy.

“Our job is to listen and recognize what is being communicated,” says Mae.

How do we become overloaded in our bodies? That's one of the first questions Marjorie Mae asks in her book, *Consider Your Ways*. Dedicated to helping people – especially moms – improve their health naturally, Marjorie Mae takes you through 22 “[Healing Rooms](#)” tackling everything from detoxification to ridding our households of the toxins that are killing us, Mae presents an astounding resource for living a healthier, happier life.

Each healing room offers up well-researched and documented information about the physical, chemical, and mental harms that “debit” our bodies' health accounts. But Mae does not just lament the problems we face; she provides real solutions, including an entire section dedicated to suggested alternatives for the everyday household products we use that introduce toxins into our lives and the lives of our children.

A companion to the book is Mae's *Healing Recipes*, a cookbook full of delicious meal and dessert ideas that don't require you to eat cardboard flavored rice cakes to make healthy choices. My favorite so far is the Turkey and Mango burgers – I love being able to eat healthy foods that taste good!

Marjorie Mae doesn't just write about it, though. She has also developed four loose leaf teas designed to address specific health issues: Red Raspberry and Lemon Balm for a natural sleep remedy; Hawthorn & Passion Flower Tea for circulation and heart health; Oregon Grape Root & Periwinkle as a digestive aid; and Sassafras Root Bark Tea for skin conditions and for those trying to quit smoking.



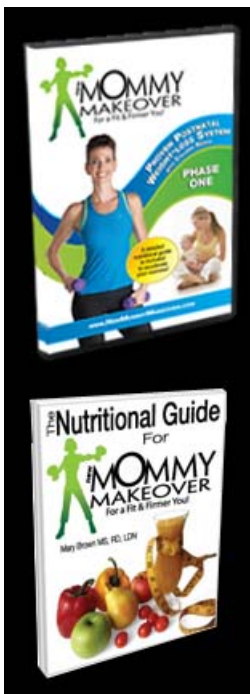
Marjorie Mae is an expert in health coaching, speaking and teaching natural remedies and foods that heal and promote health. Mae is passionate about enlightening, encouraging, energizing, and empowering all of us to take the journey to better health. Visit [Mae's Healing Rooms](#) for more information.

New Mommy Makeover For a Fit & Firmer You... Not Just for New Mommies!

I had my last baby nine years ago. She was my second birth child and the fifth child in our blended family. By the time I was three months pregnant, people asked if I was having twins; by eight months, most were convinced the doctors had missed triplets. When this little 6 pound, delicate little angel appeared, I was pretty surprised at how very little she was.

I never got the chance to really focus on recovering my body; with five kids and full-time college, a son who headed off to the Army, a mother dying of cancer, and a cross-country move to be nearer to her, my health was completely off the radar.

So I'm a little late to the Mommy Makeover effort but that hasn't stopped me from truly benefitting from Colleen Riddle's incredible advice and encouragement. Riddle, the creator of [New Mommy Makeover](#) and an AFPA Certified Pre/Post Natal Exercise Specialist developed a series of three DVDs to help new moms (and moms finally focusing on themselves) a way to firm, tone, and regain shape.



What I love about the exercises is that in addition to being effective, they are never boring. In addition to having a variety of exercising that focus on tightening and firming combined with cardio to get your blood pumping, Riddle takes the time during the video to explain how the exercises benefit your body.

Recognizing that every mom has those days when it's difficult to find even a moment to focus on herself, Riddle offers a 4-minute exercise routine (accessed as a PDF on the DVD), offering a quick and guilt free solution to those days where nothing else will fit.

There are three phases to the program, each designed to get you a little closer to your pre-pregnancy body. Unlike any other DVD exercise program I've seen, Riddle goes one step further: she offers a nutrition plan to complement the exercise program in the form of a 44-page book entitled The New Mommy Makeover Nutritional Guide, written by Mary D. Brown, MS, RD, LDN.

This comprehensive health and fitness package is ideal for new moms who want to regain their pre-pregnancy look, but it is useful for anyone looking for interesting and motivating exercise routines to get moving and get fit.

As always, consult your physician before beginning any exercise or nutrition program.

No Excuses – With Care4Hire, You Have Time for You



Finding a sitter can be tough, but without someone you can trust to leave your kids with now and then, you lose a little piece of your soul. I know – I live in a rural area where there is not a lot of choices for sitters and have a unique situation with a special needs child and two younger children that make it impossible to hire just any teen from the local high school to provide occasional respite. We

have traditionally – unfairly or not – relied mostly on our daughter. Now that she is away at college, we’re forced to consider the possibility of someone new. It’s not easy.

Care4Hire.com makes it easier, though. Care4Hire.com offers a variety of services to help moms – from finding a trustworthy babysitter to finding someone to come help clean the house on a regular basis. Care4hire.com is an online family and caregiver database providing babysitters, housekeepers, tutors, pet sitters, elder/companion care and other services for people in the United States and Canada.

The service is easy to use; you simply register and create a profile. You can then search through the listings for your area for the services you need. While there are not a lot of service providers in my small town (Bath, population 5,000) I was pleasantly surprised at the number of sitters, housekeepers, and tutors registered within a reasonable distance. In larger towns and cities, the service works even better. Care4Hire.com companies are used regularly by Dr. Phil for his guests!

Care4Hire.com is a matchmaking service, but they do not provide the screening. It is up to you to vet the potential service providers to ensure that they will meet your needs. While the service has a monthly fee (with discounts for an annual membership), they do offer a [free 7-day trial](#) to make sure the service is right for you.

In addition to daycare and housekeeping, Care4Hire.com also offers you the ability to find tutors, pet care, house sitters, and miscellaneous services.

Hiring a Babysitter – Tips from the Pros at Care4Hire.com



Hiring a babysitter can be a confusing task. There are so many things to consider as you face the task of selecting someone to care for your children in your absence, and you want to find the perfect fit between the babysitter and your family. Here are some of the most important things for you to consider when selecting a new babysitter for your children from Candi Wingate, founder of Care4Hire.com.

1. The babysitter should be able to relate easily and bond well with your children while maintaining a clear distinction from them. Babysitters must be able to play with and enjoy your children (which can often be construed by the child as peer-level interaction) while also maintaining discipline. It is easy for a babysitter (and a parent) to feel more comfortable in one role or the other: to be most comfortable being friends with the children, or to be most comfortable supervising the children and redirecting their errant behaviors.
2. The babysitter must be able to relate with your family and administer discipline to your children in a manner that is appropriate and consistent with your family's boundaries. If you have a prospective babysitter that uses social isolation (sending a child to his/her room, for example) as a method of behavior modification, and you are not comfortable with that method of behavior modification, then the prospective babysitter may not be a good fit for your family.
3. The babysitter should ideally have years of experience, solid references from prior employer-families, a clean background (pursuant to background checks), and completed training on babysitter basics (CPR, first aid, the Heimlich maneuver, basic nutrition and food preparation, and general personal and home hygiene). You can obtain background checks through Care4hire.com. The babysitter should not represent a risk to your children in any way; thus, in addition to the foregoing, the babysitter should be current on his/her vaccinations.
4. If you need your babysitter to drive, then your babysitter should have a valid driver's license, a clean (or as close to clean as possible) driving record and a reliable car.
5. The babysitter should be able to develop and carry out fun, creative, and educational experiences for your child.
6. The babysitter should be willing and able to comply with your rules about what constitutes appropriate television viewing, when s/he may use his/her cellular telephone while babysitting, when s/he may use your telephone for his/her own purposes while babysitting, when s/he may have friends over while babysitting, etc.

7. The babysitter should be capable of handling small “crises” on his/her own. You and your babysitter should come to an agreement about what issues may warrant a call to you and what issues the babysitter is authorized to handle on his/her own. Your babysitter should be able to act comfortably within the boundaries you have provided.

8. The babysitter’s expectations regarding terms and conditions of employment should be close to the terms and conditions of employment that you are offering. If you wish to hire a babysitter in a smoking home, a non-smoking prospective babysitter may not be a good fit for your family. Pay rates for babysitters should be discussed up front to ensure that the prospective babysitters are willing to work for the income you offer.

9. The babysitter should not have fears or concerns about the non-negotiable aspects of the job with your family. If you have a cat, and your prospective babysitter is severely allergic to cats, the prospective babysitter may not be a good fit for your family. (Side note: some allergic reactions can be treated with over-the-counter or prescription medications or other accommodations that may be used by the allergic babysitter.) If the prospective babysitter is unable to work specific hours or days and you need your babysitter to attend to your children on those days or in those hours, then the prospective babysitter may not be a good fit for your family.

10. The babysitter should be a positive, loving influence in your household.

Candi Wingate is an expert in the child care industry with over 20 years experience. She is the founder of Nannies4Hire.com and Care4Hire.com, and author of [100 Tips for Nannies & Families](#) and "[The Nanny Factor: A Parent's Guide to Finding the Right Nanny for Your Family](#)" and a mother of two.

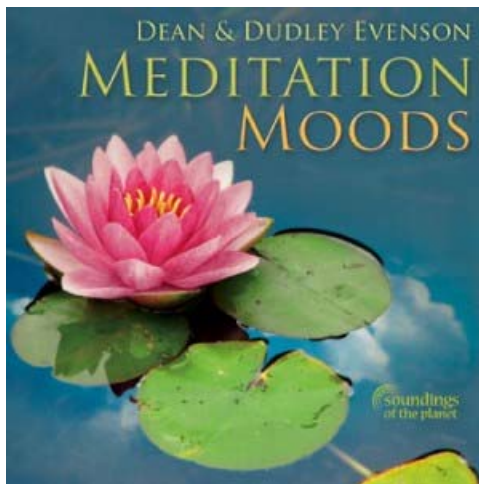
Find Inner Peace With Meditation Moods with Dean & Dudley Evenson

MomsGetReal is declaring this year to be the year every mom takes a few more minutes each day for herself. As moms, we all tend to get caught up in the roles we play – nurturers, chauffeurs, CFOs, caretakers (to more than just our kids!). We sometimes forget to be individuals.

So this year, we think every mom should carve ten minutes out of the day for mind clearing. Meditation. Me-time. Whatever you want to call it, carve out for yourself a 10-minute escape from everything (including the Internet, cell phone, tablet, and other digital devices that keep you bogged down).

There are proven benefits from taking even ten minutes a day for quiet meditation, including the physically measurable result of lower blood pressure, as well as providing your body with a better mechanism for handling and reducing stress, improving your overall sense of well-being, and even improving your ability to sleep at night. All those benefits in 10 little minutes.

You are worth it.



And when you take that ten minutes and it starts turning into ten minutes of thinking about what you should be doing, making grocery lists in your head, or otherwise not being able to shut out the noise of the day, you're going to do one more thing: push play.

When you need a little help toning down the busyness in your mind, [Dean and Dudley Evenson](#) are creating peace inducing, beautiful music that can help you escape.

Meditation Moods is one of many beautiful collections of music available from [Soundings of the Planet](#). Incorporating sounds of nature with peaceful music created with flutes, harps, keyboards, and singing bowls.

The music the couple creates provides an escape from the pressures of life that works better than a massage (although they have had their music recommended by [massage.com](#)) and allows you to literally float off into a relaxing space and discover the magic of utter escape.

Getting To Know Yourself Better To Achieve Your Desires

I never spent much time as a single person. I was involved in a serious but rather complicated relationship during high school, went off to college and almost immediately met my first husband to whom I was engaged within two weeks of meeting and married to for seven years, and I wasn't quite legally divorced when I met Dave and became a permanent fixture in his life – a place I've happily stayed the last 15 years.

But I do know a little something about the importance of knowing yourself in order to have a successful relationship – a gift I was given in the process of building my relationship with my husband and children but what often works a lot better if you take the time when you're single and independent to do. I'm a bit of a late bloomer.

If you are single, you want a serious relationship (a key factor in success) and you have been having trouble finding a life partner, it's time to stop looking.

Not forever.

And if you're not looking for your soul mate but you feel there is something missing in your life, stop looking.

Again, not forever.

Just long enough to read Bonnie Bruderer's life-changing books.



Reading these books won't take long; they are each short and easy to read. Bonnie offers insight and practical advice for understanding and embracing yourself so that you know who you are so that you can get what you want – in love and in life.

[Be The One](#) starts you on a journey of self discovery that lets you clear your mind and discover your true self. This is a relationship book, but not the kind that you think – it's a relationship with yourself book.

[Staying "The One" While Finding "The One"](#) dives deeper into the relationship world to help you keep hold of yourself as you navigate the dating world. With chapters like "Communication – Sometimes a Tattoo Will Last Longer Than a Relationship" and "Date Yourself First – Keep Your Standards High" Bonnie infuses her guide with humor and intelligence.

[Be the Psychic](#) is the culmination of Bonnie's efforts to help women manifest excellence in their lives. She incorporates coaching and income opportunities through [V.I.S.S. International and the Vision Board Experience](#).

Improving Your Financial Health



Guest Contributor Kristin Mullen

You may have made the New Year's resolution to get healthy or be more active, but have you ever considered the status of your financial health? Now is a great time for you to focus on your personal finances and make sure this next year is much better than the last.

Start a Budget

The first thing you need to do when you are trying to improve your finances is to set a strict budget. The more money you are able to save, the better your financial future will be, so make sure you create a budget that will save you the most money but is still reasonable enough for you to follow.

When creating this budget, the first step is for you to track all of your spending for at least one month. Write down every penny you spend and what you spend it on. Gather all of your financial statements for the month and add those to your list as well. Add up all of your expenses at the end of the month and look to see where you might be able to save some money. Obviously, you aren't going to be able to save with some of your fixed expenses like your rent or mortgage payments, but you might be able to save some money on groceries, cut out unnecessary spending at the department store, or cut your cable bill for a short time if necessary.

Once your budget is set, make sure you are committed to stick to your plan. Continue to journal all of your expenses so you know exactly where your money is going. Also, reevaluate your budget at the end of each month. If something isn't working, change your plan until it works for you.

Save Before You Spend

Far too many people spend their paycheck and then try to save what they have left at the end of the month. With this strategy, you will end up saving very little or maybe nothing at all. The best strategy when it comes to saving is to save first and spend later. Add a savings "expense" to your monthly budget and treat it as if it were any other expense. Put that money away as soon as you get your paycheck and budget the money you have left. With this savings account, the possibilities are endless. You could save for a romantic vacation, have some money set aside for emergencies, and everything in between.

Get Rid of Your Debt

Another important factor to making sure your finances are stable and healthy is to be debt free. This may not be as easy as it sounds, but it is very important for your financial

future to get rid of as much of your debt as quickly as possible. However, if you are having trouble making your payments on time, you may need to consider negotiating a new payment plan with your creditor.

Do as much as you can as quickly as you can, and take the proper steps necessary to pay off your debt before you make any more large purchases. Pay off your credit cards completely before you make any more purchases with them. Once they are paid off, you still shouldn't use them unless you are prepared to pay off the balance immediately. Don't buy a car on payments when you are still making payments on another car. Try to get buy and put the amount you would normally pay each month for the new car into a separate savings account. If you are able to save long enough, you will be able to pay for a new car in full when you need to.

Finally, make sure you are teaching your children these new financial habits. Let them learn from your mistakes, and give them the advice they will need to make sure they don't make the same mistakes you did. With your help, you can prevent them from making poor financial choices and help them be financially successful in the future.

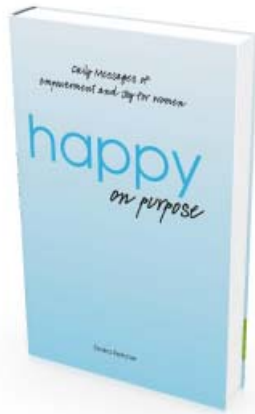
Kristin Mullen is an author who writes guest posts on the topics of business, marketing, credit cards, and personal finance. Additionally, she works for a website that focuses on educating readers about [debt consolidation](#).

Daily Inspiration for Happiness from Diana Fletcher

Sometimes, it's the simplest things that make a difference in our lives. A friend reaches out to us and reminds us that we mean something to them. A child freely gives hugs. A boss expresses gratitude for the efforts you make.

So often, we get caught up in the mundane minutiae of our daily lives that we forget to remember how important the little things really are. It's at those moments that happiness seems like a distant goal we will work toward when we have time.

If you don't want to wait for happiness – I know I don't – then you have to be willing to change your life. You have to decide, consciously, to make room each day for appreciation. You need to spend a moment each day paying it forward. You need to stop worrying about what you don't have and what you haven't achieved and just enjoy the moment and the people in it who make you smile and fill your heart with joy.



But to really understand the path to happiness, you might want to read [Happy on Purpose by Diana Fletcher](#). The book asks a minute or two of each day to be spent on reflection, on learning to listen to yourself, sharing daily inspirational quotes and “Happy Actions” that help you take an active role in claiming your own happiness every day.

Laid out in chronological form, the book is designed to start anywhere, using the daily prompts to refocus your mind on experiencing happiness now.

My favorite, as it speaks so directly to me and many of the women I know, appears on June 16:

You may be a business owner and/or a mother. You are a daughter and that may involve a new role of caregiver. You may be a wife, a board member, a homeroom mom, an active grandmother, a volunteer...the list goes on and on.

But in the midst of all this, there is something very important to recognize.

Although you have gotten used to the craziness of multitasking and of being incredibly busy, you are still only one person. You can only do so much.

Happy Action:

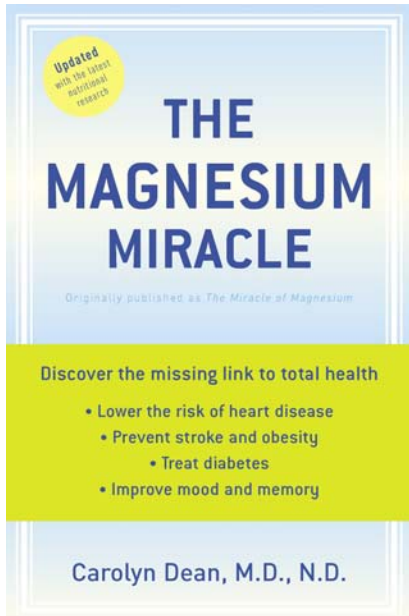
Take a moment today to celebrate all you accomplish. If you truly would like to slow down a little, make a list of everything you do for a week.

Look at the list with an eye toward what you can let go. Start small if you need to, but get started.

That is great advice!

A Healthier You Through the Magnesium Miracle?

All through the month, we've been exploring ways you can be healthier by making better choices in what you eat, how you move, what you spend, and how you think. But Dr. Carolyn Dean believes there's one thing we all need to be thinking about a little more often: magnesium.



According to Dr. Dean - Carolyn - a medical doctor, naturopath, acupuncturist, homeopath, herbalist, and certified clinical nutritionist – demonstrates in her book, [The Magnesium Miracle](#), how critical the mineral is to humans, guarding against and protecting you from a variety of diseases including heart disease, stroke, osteoporosis, and diabetes as well as mental illnesses like depression.

The book explains how 21st Century diets make it more likely that magnesium is missing, how it can affect the body, and what conditions magnesium can help to improve. The book is documented with evidence-based research from some of the leading medical minds in the world.

Dr. Dean outlines some of the symptoms that can occur with magnesium deficiency, such as heart palpitation & high blood pressure, constipation and difficulty swallowing, PMS and menstrual cramps, diabetes, migraine headaches, numbness & tingling, anxiety, irritability, chronic fatigue, and even asthma.

An often overlooked mineral, Dr. Dean believes magnesium holds the key to unlocking better health, and her book is an enormous resource addressing some of the most common health struggles being faced by our generation.

Can magnesium make a difference in your life?

Deal Your Way To Better Health with FitDeck



[FitDeck](#) is a unique exercise tool that requires no equipment besides your body. Easy to slip in a suitcase or keep handy at your desk, FitDeck allows you to work out anywhere. You can use an individual FitDeck, or you can use multiple decks shuffled together to get a cross-training effect.

The greatest thing about FitDeck is that the randomness of which card you choose keeps your exercise from becoming boring or routine. Each deck has 56 cards, 50 of which are exercise cards while the other 6 are informational. The cards have images and instructions for the exercises, stretches, and movements you can do to improve your health and fitness.

FitDeck features these series -

- FitDeck Bodyweight
- FitDeck Senior
- FitDeck Junior
- FitDeck Yoga
- FitDeck Pilates
- FitDeck Stretch

- FitDeck Prenatal
- FitDeck Postnatal
- FitDeck Basketball
- FitDeck Soccer
- FitDeck Swimming

The decks come in a handy hard case, making them easy to stow in your purse, briefcase, or suitcase for exercising anywhere you happen to be.

While you should always consult with your physician before starting a new exercise routine, FitDeck is a great solution for those who need inspiration, guidance, and motivation that is easy to carry anywhere and inexpensive.

About MomsGetReal™

[MomsGetReal](#)™ is a premier parenting community owned by Shadra Bruce and operated by a team of socially savvy, dedicated mom bloggers known as the Mama Posse™. Our extended reach, powerful credibility, and a growing fan base is an exciting thing to be a part of.

MomsGetReal™ has grown into a phenomenal community of Moms dedicated to helping other moms know that when life with kids skids out of control and gets a little bit crazy, we're here to help with stories, advice, giveaways, and recommendations that make it all a little easier.

All of the Momspirations who write for MomsGetReal™ are dedicated to stripping away the pretense and getting real about Motherhood in the 21st Century. MomsGetReal™ is a growing community of mom experts who seek to freely share their experiences in order to help others find solutions, solace, advice, and resources that make raising healthy, happy kids a little bit easier, empowering Moms to make a difference for their families, in their communities, and in the world.

Would you like your product to be included in next year's Stress Less Holiday Guide? Simply contact [MomsGetReal](#) for more information. MomsGetReal produces four to eight product review guides per year. Upcoming guides include:

The **New Year, New You Guide** will feature health & wellness, diet and fitness, and weight loss products and run January 1 - January 31 on the site and include a freely distributable publication featuring all sponsors and products.

Future guides:

Kid Lit Event (children's books)

The Ultimate Travel Guide (summer 2012)

Toy Extravaganza (Fall 2012)

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All prizes awards during the All Treats, No Tricks Fall Event were awarded using random.org to choose the winner from entrants for each product.

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About Shadra



Shadra Bruce is the creator of [MomsGetReal](#)[™]. In addition to her business as a [social media consultant, writer, & editor](#), Shadra has been a contributing writer to several well-known websites, newspapers, magazines, and journals. She was a feature columnist for two years, penning the weekly feature “A More Perfect Union” with her husband Dave for the Corning, New York newspaper The Leader. In the column, they explored the joys and challenges of building a newly formed blended family together.

Still happily partnering as parents and writers, Shadra and David are co-authoring a book based on their popular news column, [Ethical Revolutionist](#)[™]. In 2011 David launched [DadsGetReal](#)[™]. The two serve on the Board of Directors and as national co-chairs for the Parent Advisory Board for [Kidz Rock! Inc.](#)

Shadra is the author of [Stories from a Step Mom](#) (set to publish in early 2012) and a leading expert in family relationships, stepparenting and blended families. She has a bachelor’s degree in Economics and a master’s degree in English Literature.

Passionate about helping to improve relations in families, communities, and cultures, Shadra is a strong advocate for global peace. She resides in Bath, New York with her husband and children. A gypsy at heart who loves to travel, Shadra is fluent in French, essentially nomadic, and comfortable making her home wherever her travels take her, which is often Montreal.