



# Take Time

A Journey and Journal Toward Greater Happiness  
During an Unhappy Time (Caregiving)

By Denise M. Brown

For information and support as you care for your family members, please visit [Caregiving.com](http://Caregiving.com).

Thank you for buying our book! We also publish:

- Take Comfort, Reflections of Hope for Caregivers;
- Take Comfort, Too, More Reflections of Hope for Caregivers;
- Good Morning! Sunny Reflections to Start Your Day; and
- The Caregiving Years, Six Stages to a Meaningful Journey.

You can purchase our books at [Caregiving.com](http://Caregiving.com).

© 2011 Tad Publishing and Consulting Co. and Denise M. Brown

All rights reserved. No part of this book may be reproduced or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic or mechanical, including photocopying, recording, or by any information storage and retrieval system, without permission in writing from the publisher.

Published by Tad Publishing and Consulting Co., Chicago, IL.

Published in the United States of America

ISBN: 978-1-105-93818-4

To finally achieving happiness.



# Take Time

A Journey and Journal Toward Greater Happiness  
During an Unhappy Time (Caregiving)

## Table of Contents

Month One:	11
Month Two:	20
Month Three:	29
Month Four:	38
Month Five:	47
Month Six:	56
Month Seven:	65
Month Eight:	74
Month Nine:	83
Month Ten:	92
Month Eleven:	101
Month Twelve:	110

“Happiness is neither this thing nor that...it is simply growth.  
We are happy when we are growing.”  
- W.B. Yeats

## Why Take Time?

In her book, *The Happiness Project*, Gretchen Rubin challenges herself to find greater happiness in her ordinary life. She chooses to make adjustments that affect her day-to-day existence in order to achieve and sustain the feeling of happiness. She does this so that when a crisis occurs (she worries about the future health of her husband), she'll have learned the tools to stay happy.

She's about finding happiness before the crisis.

What about after the crisis? Can a happiness project help increase happiness then? Can tools and techniques be learned after the crisis to increase happiness?

For family caregivers of persons with chronic illnesses, the day can be too full of worries, laundry, hands-on care and medications. It definitely can be an unhappy situation.

But, can it be a happier one?

I'm so glad you've joined me on this journey. We're setting out to find out: Can we increase happiness during a difficult time in life? Each month, you'll set goals based on one word: Plan, Replace, Space, Join, Resolve, Let Go, Quiet, Teach, Learn, Rejoice, Save, Say. You can set one goal or more, but try to keep within three goals. You'll keep progress of how well you're doing with the goal(s) and reflect on what's going well. At the end of each month, we hope an effective action becomes a helpful habit.

Each month, when you decide on your action, you'll tell someone about your commitment. Why not ask who you'll tell to join you? Companionship on the journey helps you stay on your road to more happiness. Invite your friends, family members and support group members.

Because you've purchased this journal, you also receive a discount (10%) off coaching services with me. You can choose to schedule a 30-minute coaching session at the discounted rate as often as needed throughout our project. To learn more and to schedule a session, just send me an email ([denise@caregiving.com](mailto:denise@caregiving.com)) and mention this code (Happiness Journal).

I hope you'll achieve lasting change--that you'll bring each month's accomplishments into the next month. When you do this, you'll have made at least twelve improvements in your life at the end of the year. More importantly, you'll have increased your level of happiness.

As you go through the journey, be open to doing your best, simply because that's what this is about--finding your best during a difficult time of your life.

And, perhaps, finding your best means you've also found your happiness.



## But, Should I Really Take Time for Happiness?

*(Editor's Note: This article appears in my book, The Caregiving Years, Six Stages to a Meaningful Journey. I'm reprinting here for you because I think it's the best explanation on why you can feel happy during a sad time.)*

Many years ago, a member of one of the online support groups at Caregiving.com regularly reminded the group members: Life is for the living.

In caregiving, you sometimes feel stuck between life and death. How do you go about life when death and decline won't go away?

A few years ago, The History Channel aired "WWII in HD." During one of the episodes, we saw how Londoners managed life during WWII, when bombings became a normal part of living. The Blitz (sustained German bombing) occurred from September 7, 1940 until May 10, 1941, with smaller attacks continuing until the war ended.

We saw footage of London devastation—lives lost, homes ruined, a city rubble. But, we also saw footage of Londoners walking around the wreckage to go about their days: shopping, sending children to school, even attending a dance.

They never stopped living, even as death and destruction surrounded them.

For you, caregiving can seem like another kind of blitz; you get bombed and bombarded by bad news, unsuccessful treatments, continual losses, sadness.

And, so during the bombings, you may catch yourself thinking: "I'd better pass on that bit of fun. Our life is just not so good right now." You may think enjoying life means disrespecting the seriousness of your life.

Au contraire.

You sacrifice so much. Don't sacrifice a moment to laugh or to dance or to simply smile. These are moments given to you, just for you. Take them. And, then share them. If the Londoners could do it, you can, too.

Take time to find your happy.

Before we start, take a few moments to reflect on the state of your happiness. Please answer a few questions on the following page. (We ask you to complete the same survey at the end of the twelve months. This survey becomes a benchmark to measure your success.)

## **The State of Your Happiness**

On a scale of 1 to 5, with 1 being the least happy and 5 being the most, how would you rate your overall level of happiness?

Describe a time in your life when you felt happy.

Describe your happiness today.

Your Weight and Height:

Your Blood Pressure:

The date you completed this information:

## Month One: Quiet

Here we go in our first month. Our goal is Quiet. Because caregiving can seem so noisy, I thought you'd like a month of quiet.

This month, you can spend time in quiet reflection. You can quiet your doubts. You can quiet your doubters.

Some ways you can think about "Quiet":

1. You can take quiet time to reflect (or pray or meditate) daily.
2. You can take quiet time to reflect on your dreams and goals.
3. You can take quiet time to recover from a hectic time.
4. You can quiet your doubts with confidence.
5. You can quiet those who doubt you with confidence.
6. You can quiet your rumblings for freedom by taking time for freedom.
7. You can quiet your temptations to be less than who you are by knowing you are enough.
8. You can quiet your regrets by taking action.
9. You can choose quiet when making noise will only cause pain.
10. You can quiet bad memories by making good memories.
11. You can quiet worries by making a plan.
12. You can quiet nonsense by talking sense.

You can set one goal or two or more. It's up to you. And, you can choose a goal related to caregiving. Or, not. Again, it's up to you.

Once you decide how you'll quiet, then:

1. Write it down on the next page.
2. Tell a friend.
3. Keep track of your progress.

My Action(s) for Quiet:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

My Progress (Write notes about what went well, what you'll continue doing, insights you've gained)

Day 1

Day 2

Day 3

Day 4

Day 5

Day 6

Day 7

Day 8

Take Time 13

Day 9

Day 10

Day 11

Day 12

Take Time 14

Day 13

Day 14

Day 15

Day 16

Take Time 15



Day 17

Day 18

Day 19

Day 20

Take Time 16

Day 21

Day 22

Day 23

Day 24

Take Time 17

Day 25

Day 26

Day 27

Day 28

Take Time 18

Day 29

Day 30

Day 31

I'm bringing the following change(s) with me into Month Two:

Take Time 19

## Month Two: Plan

I hope you found your inner quiet last month and that, during moments of worry, despair and sadness, your quiet voice assures you that you can continue.

So, here we go for our second month. Our goal is Plan. Without a plan, life can seem like a mess. A plan-less caregiving experience can seem like a nightmare.

So, this month, you can make plans for life, for caregiving, or for the next season (summer, winter). This month is about creating a plan for what's screaming for organization. With a plan, you create a foundation, a road map, a process. The plan leads to success.

Some ways you can think about "Plan":

1. You make plans for a trip you will take, whenever you can take it.
2. You can plan your day so you'll know when you will fit in exercise.
3. You can plan your summer so you can make the most of the long-awaited warm weather. Or, you can make a plan for winter so you won't go stir-crazy during the cold weather.
4. You can plan your future, so you're ready when it arrives.
5. You make back-up plans so when Plan A goes awry, Plan B steps in.
6. You plan a special evening during the month for yourself.
7. You plan for what's next in the progression of your caree's disease process.
8. You plan for how you'll manage care, just in case (of the flu, of a job change, of another unforeseen change).
9. You plan for retirement with an investment schedule.
10. You plan for tomorrow with an effective daily To Do list.
11. You plan to keep a life through caregiving by enjoying what makes you feel alive regularly.
12. You plan in case care becomes too much for home by researching assisted living and nursing home options in your caree's community.
13. You plan to enjoy the good moments in each day by believing those good moments exist.

You can set one goal or two or more. It's up to you. And, you can choose a goal related to caregiving. Or, not. Again, it's up to you.

Once you decide how you'll plan, then:

1. Write it down on the next page.
2. Tell a friend.
3. Keep track of your progress.

My Action(s) for Plan:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

My Progress (Write notes about what went well, what you'll continue doing, insights you've gained)

Day 1

Day 2

Day 3

Day 4

Day 5

Day 6

Day 7

Day 8

Take Time 22

Day 9

Day 10

Day 11

Day 12

Take Time 23



Day 13

Day 14

Day 15

Day 16

Take Time 24

Day 17

Day 18

Day 19

Day 20

Take Time 25

Day 21

Day 22

Day 23

Day 24

Take Time 26

Day 25

Day 26

Day 27

Day 28

Take Time 27

Day 29

I'm bringing the following change(s) with me into Month Three:

Take Time 28

## Month Three: Learn

I hope Month Two found you making plans--for life, for caregiving, for summer or winter, for tomorrow. A helpful hint: Every worry needs good plan. A plan puts a worry into action and helps you feel better.

I also hope you're still taking time for quiet. We're building on the successes and changes of our previous months.

So, here we go for third month. Our goal is to learn. Again, what you learn can be a part of caregiving--or not. Learn a new coping strategy for caregiving's difficult days. Learn about your new neighbor. Learn about a new topic or subject. Just learn.

Some suggestions for you;

1. Learn about your caree and his/her life story.
2. Learn about the professionals who help you in your caregiving role.
3. Learn a technique that makes hands-on care easier.
4. Learn a strategy that helps you cope with the bad days.
5. Learn a new way to keep connected with friends and family (i.e., Skype, Facebook, Twitter, etc.).
6. Learn about a topic of interest to you.
7. Learn a new way to get to a familiar destination.
8. Learn the name of someone you see every day.
9. Learn a creative outlet, like painting, photography, journaling.
10. Learn about the wisdom you've gained in caregiving.
11. Something new about old friends.
12. Something new about new friends.

You can set one goal or two or more. It's up to you. And, you can choose a goal related to caregiving. Or, not. Again, it's up to you.

Once you decide how you'll learn, then:

1. Write it down on the next page.
2. Tell a friend.
3. Keep track of your progress.

My Action(s) for Learn:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

My Progress (Write notes about what went well, what you'll continue doing, insights you've gained)

Day 1

Day 2

Day 3

Day 4

Take Time 30

Day 5

Day 6

Day 7

Day 8

Take Time 31



Day 9

Day 10

Day 11

Day 12

Take Time 32

Day 13

Day 14

Day 15

Day 16

Take Time 33

Day 17

Day 18

Day 19

Day 20

Take Time 34

Day 21

Day 22

Day 23

Day 24

Take Time 35

Day 25

Day 26

Day 27

Day 28

Take Time 36

Day 29

Day 30

Day 31

I'm bringing the following change(s) with me into Month Four:

Take Time 37

## Month Four: Teach

I hope last month found you learning. It's interesting what happens when we put our focus on a goal. Continue learning and planning. I also hope you're still taking time for quiet.

We're going to the flip side of last month in our fourth month. This month, we're teaching.

Some thoughts for you about teach:

1. You can teach a class on Caregiving.com (just email me ([denise@caregiving.com](mailto:denise@caregiving.com)) and we'll work out the details).
2. You can teach a class to your support group (ask your support group leader for help).
3. You can teach another family caregiver a technique or tool that works for you.
4. You can teach other family members about what you've learned about your caree.
5. You can teach what you learned last month to family and friends.
6. You can teach others how to treat you.
7. You can teach in your community by volunteering to tutor.
8. You can teach others how to reach out for help by reaching for help.
9. You can teach a group of friends about a particular topic of interest.
10. You can teach patience and understanding by showing patience and understanding.

You can set one goal or two or more. It's up to you. And, you can choose a goal related to caregiving. Or, not. Again, it's up to you.

Once you decide what you'll teach, then:

1. Write it down on the next page.
2. Tell a friend.
3. Keep track of your progress.

My Action(s) for Teach:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

My Progress (Write notes about what went well, what you'll continue doing, insights you've gained)

Day 1

Day 2

Day 3

Day 4



Day 5

Day 6

Day 7

Day 8

Take Time 40

Day 9

Day 10

Day 11

Day 12

Take Time 41

Day 13

Day 14

Day 15

Day 16

Take Time 42

Day 17

Day 18

Day 19

Day 20

Take Time 43

Day 21

Day 22

Day 23

Day 24

Take Time 44

Day 25

Day 26

Day 27

Day 28

Take Time 45

Day 29

Day 30

I'm bringing the following change(s) with me into Month Five:

Take Time 46

## Month Five: Resolve

I hope Month Four provided opportunities for you to teach. Continue to be open to the possibilities of teaching: You have learned so much. It's important to share your knowledge and insights.

And, keep on learning and planning. I also hope you're still taking time for quiet.

In Month Five, we're resolving.

Some thoughts for you about resolving:

1. You can resolve a pressing concern.
2. You can resolve to approach your days differently.
3. You can resolve to change a relationship by changing who you are in the relationship.
4. You can resolve to let go of thoughts about a past you can't change.
5. You can resolve to manage a challenge in a new way.
6. You can resolve to face problems head-on.
7. You can resolve a worry.
8. You can resolve to take an action, rather than fret over taking the action.
9. You can resolve a pain about a relationship.
10. You can resolve to take a more active role in living the life you want.
11. You can resolve a worry about your future by making a plan and gathering resources.
12. You can resolve the tiny details you think about too much by making a change.

You can set one goal or two or more. It's up to you. And, you can choose a goal related to caregiving. Or, not. Again, it's up to you.

Once you decide what you'll resolve, then:

1. Write it down on the next page.
2. Tell a friend.
3. Keep track of your progress.



My Action(s) for Resolve:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

My Progress (Write notes about what went well, what you'll continue doing, insights you've gained)

Day 1

Day 2

Day 3

Day 4

Day 5

Day 6

Day 7

Day 8

Take Time 49

Day 9

Day 10

Day 11

Day 12

Take Time 50

Day 13

Day 14

Day 15

Day 16

Day 17

Day 18

Day 19

Day 20

Take Time 52

Day 21

Day 22

Day 23

Day 24

Take Time 53

Day 25

Day 26

Day 27

Day 28

Take Time 54

Day 29

Day 30

Day 31

I'm bringing the following change(s) with me into Month Six:

Take Time 55



## Month Six: Say

I hope last month helped you resolve. I enjoy resolve--it really pushes me to take care of pressing issues I've been letting go. I plan to keep on resolving rather than procrastinating.

And, keep on on teaching, learning and planning. I also hope you're still taking time for quiet.

In Month Six, our action word is Say.

Some thoughts for you about saying:

1. You can commit to saying how you feel about loved ones on a regular basis.
2. You can say that you need help when you need it.
3. You can say when something is wrong and not working as you would like.
4. You can say "thank you" every chance you get.
5. You can say your peace when others challenge you about your decisions.
6. You can say what's on your heart.
7. You can say a priority or goal and then work to achieve it.
8. You can say when it's time for something to end.
9. You can say when it's time for something to begin.
10. You can say what caregiving is like for you.
11. You can say what you want.
12. You can say how you feel when you're feeling good.
13. Your can say three gratitudes every day.

You can set one goal or two or more. It's up to you. And, you can choose a goal related to caregiving. Or, not. Again, it's up to you.

Once you decide what you'll say, then:

1. Write it down on the next page.
2. Tell a friend.
3. Keep track of your progress.

My Action(s) for Say:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

My Progress (Write notes about what went well, what you'll continue doing, insights you've gained)

Day 1

Day 2

Day 3

Day 4

Day 5

Day 6

Day 7

Day 8

Take Time 58

Day 9

Day 10

Day 11

Day 12

Take Time 59

Day 13

Day 14

Day 15

Day 16

Take Time 60

Day 17

Day 18

Day 19

Day 20

Take Time 61

Day 21

Day 22

Day 23

Day 24

Take Time 62

Day 25

Day 26

Day 27

Day 28

Take Time 63



Day 29

Day 30

I'm bringing the following change(s) with me into Month Seven:

Take Time 64

## Month Seven: Replace

This month, our action is Replace. We're replacing something that's not so good for us (or for our family or our house or our community or our world) with something better. We can replace a habit, a piece of equipment, a mindset, an action, a service and/or a belief.

You can replace:

1. A candy bar with a piece of fruit.
2. Plastic grocery bags with reusable canvas ones.
3. A sharp tongue with a smile.
4. A not-so-good friend with a better one.
5. A soda (diet or regular) with a glass of cold water.
6. An unkindness with a kindness.
7. A service that doesn't work with a service that does.
8. A guilt with a forgiveness.
9. A late night with an early night.
10. A worry with a plan.
11. A lack of faith that will be okay with a faith that all will be okay.
12. An outfit or piece of clothing that doesn't fit with an outfit or piece of clothing that does.
13. A piece of equipment which doesn't work with one that does.
14. A lack of appreciation with words of appreciation.
15. A cluttered drawer with an organized one.
16. An unhelpful health care professional with a helpful one.
17. A judgment with an acceptance.
18. A directive with a request.
19. An assumption with a question.
20. A fear with information.
21. A no with a yes.
22. A yes with a no.
23. A resentment with a love.

You can set one goal or two or more. It's up to you. And, you can choose a goal related to caregiving. Or, not. Again, it's up to you.

Once you decide on what you'll replace, take action.

1. Write it down on the next page.
2. Tell a friend.
3. Keep track of your progress.

My Action(s) for Replace:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

My Progress (Write notes about what went well, what you'll continue doing, insights you've gained)

Day 1

Day 2

Day 3

Day 4

Day 5

Day 6

Day 7

Day 8

Take Time 67

Day 9

Day 10

Day 11

Day 12

Take Time 68

Day 13

Day 14

Day 15

Day 16

Take Time 69

Day 17

Day 18

Day 19

Day 20

Take Time 70

Day 21

Day 22

Day 23

Day 24

Take Time 71



Day 25

Day 26

Day 27

Day 28

Take Time 72

Day 29

Day 30

Day 31

I'm bringing the following change(s) with me into Month Eight:

Take Time 73

## Month Eight: Join

I hope you enjoyed last month's goal, Replace, and feel as if you gained a healthier habit, action or way. I also hope you experienced a different way of thinking about your day—that you have a choice. And, you can replace what doesn't work with what does.

This month, our action word is Join.

Some ways you can think about using the word Join:

1. Join an online group or club that will connect you with others who share an interest with you.
2. You can join together with another family caregiver to create a “Buddy System.” You check in regularly with each other to provide comfort and support.
3. You can join a club or group in your community that will provide a social outlet.
4. You can join forces with a resource in your community to find an answer or a solution to a current worry or obstacle.
5. You can join your local library, museum or community center in order to enjoy regular outings.
6. You can join your local gym so you'll exercise regularly.
7. You can join in the efforts of a charitable organization that does work you believe in.
8. You can join in when others have fun; it's okay to take a break from the seriousness of caregiving.
9. You can join support group for family caregivers, either online or in your community.
10. You can join the disconnects in your day with a ritual or a routine so that the day flows easier.

You can set one goal or two or more. It's up to you. And, you can choose a goal related to caregiving. Or, not. Again, it's up to you.

Once you decide what you'll join, then:

1. Write it down on the next page.
2. Tell a friend.
3. Keep track of your progress.

My Action(s) for Month Eight:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

My Progress (Write notes about what went well, what you'll continue doing, insights you've gained)

Day 1

Day 2

Day 3

Day 4

Day 5

Day 6

Day 7

Day 8

Take Time 76

Day 9

Day 10

Day 11

Day 12

Take Time 77

Day 13

Day 14

Day 15

Day 16

Take Time 78

Day 17

Day 18

Day 19

Day 20

Take Time 79



Day 21

Day 22

Day 23

Day 24

Take Time 80

Day 25

Day 26

Day 27

Day 28

Day 29

Day 30

Day 31

I'm bringing the following change(s) with me into Month Nine:

Take Time 82

## Month Nine: Save

I hope you enjoyed last month's goal, Join. I also hope it helped you to re-think the opportunities to join in your day. Just joining in a conversation can be an empowering experience.

I hope you're still replacing what doesn't work with what does. And, keep on joining.

So, here we go for our ninth month. Our goal is Save.

Some ways you can think about using the word Save:

1. You can save money in order to enjoy a special outing in the short-term.
2. You can save for the long-term (retirement, vacation, your own business).
3. You can save your journals.
4. You can save photos.
5. You can save your sanity with planned, regular breaks.
6. You can save yourself from a heap of trouble by venting in a safe, objective setting.
7. You can save time by asking for help.
8. You can save your energy by picking your battles.
9. You can save your thoughts by journaling or blogging.
10. You can save yourself heartache by asking questions to avoid making assumptions (and jumping to conclusions) during a conversation.
11. You can save your spirit by believing in yourself--in your decisions, your choices, your values.
12. You can save your caree's life story in a photo album, journal, video or recipe book.
13. You can save mementos of important times in your life in a special box (you can look in the box when you feel discouraged).

You can set one goal or two or more. It's up to you. And, you can choose a goal related to caregiving. Or, not. Again, it's up to you.

Once you decide what you'll save, then:

1. Write it down on the next page.
2. Tell a friend.
3. Keep track of your progress.

My Action(s) for Save:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

My Progress (Write notes about what went well, what you'll continue doing, insights you've gained)

Day 1

Day 2

Day 3

Day 4

Day 5

Day 6

Day 7

Day 8

Take Time 85

Day 9

Day 10

Day 11

Day 12

Day 13

Day 14

Day 15

Day 16

Take Time 87



Day 17

Day 18

Day 19

Day 20

Take Time 88

Day 21

Day 22

Day 23

Day 24

Take Time 89

Day 25

Day 26

Day 27

Day 28

Take Time 90

Day 29

Day 30

I'm bringing the following change(s) with me into Month Ten:

Take Time 91

## Month Ten: Space

I hope you enjoyed last month's goal, Save. I also hope it helped you think of “Saving” in a new way. It's about saving what's important to you.

I hope you're still replacing what doesn't work with what does. And, keep on joining and saving.

So, here we go for our tenth month. Our goal is Space.

Some ways you can think about using the word Space:

1. You give yourself more space by getting more help.
2. You create a space in your house that's just for you.
3. You give yourself space to make mistakes.
4. You make space by cleaning out your closets.
5. You make space for the good in your life by letting go of the bad.
6. You give yourself the space needed to recover from caregiving's setbacks.
7. You set boundaries to protect your emotional space.
8. You give your caree space to have bad moments.
9. You take space when it opens up.
10. You honor your space in this world by making fitness a priority.
11. You can give space to people and their “moods”.
12. You can give space to your dreams so they have room to grow.
13. You can give space to your risks so you have time recover if the risks don't work.
14. You can give space to caregiving by organizing your caregiving supplies and equipment.

You can set one goal or two or more. It's up to you. And, you can choose a goal related to caregiving. Or, not. Again, it's up to you.

Once you decide how you'll use space, then:

1. Write it down on the next page.
2. Tell a friend.
3. Keep track of your progress.

My Action(s) for Space:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

My Progress (Write notes about what went well, what you'll continue doing, insights you've gained)

Day 1

Day 2

Day 3

Day 4

Day 5

Day 6

Day 7

Day 8

Take Time 94

Day 9

Day 10

Day 11

Day 12

Take Time 95



Day 13

Day 14

Day 15

Day 16

Take Time 96

Day 17

Day 18

Day 19

Day 20

Take Time 97

Day 21

Day 22

Day 23

Day 24

Take Time 98

Day 25

Day 26

Day 27

Day 28

Take Time 99

Day 29

Day 30

Day 31

I'm bringing the following change(s) with me into Month Eleven:

Take Time 100

## **Month Eleven: Let Go**

I hope you enjoyed last month's goal, Space. I also hope you created space for your life for what works for you.

I hope you're still replacing what doesn't work with what does. And, keep on joining and saving. We're building on the successes and changes of our previous months.

So, here we go for our eleventh month. Our goal is Let Go. There's no better time than today to let go.

Some ways you can think about “Letting Go”:

1. You can let go of thoughts which keep you down.
2. You can let go of relationships which no longer reflect your values, your life.
3. You can let go of “the should's” you tell yourself.
4. You can let go of controlling others.
5. You can let go of what was and accept what is.
6. You can let go of others' issues rather than taking them on.
7. You can let go of traditions or routines which no longer work.
8. You can let go of unrealistic expectations you have of your family.
9. You can let go of services providers which aren't working out.
10. You can let go of rituals, schedules and habits which hold you back.

You can set one goal or two or more. It's up to you. And, you can choose a goal related to caregiving. Or, not. Again, it's up to you.

Once you decide how you'll let go, then:

1. Write it down on the next page.
2. Tell a friend.
3. Keep track of your progress.

My Action(s) for Let Go:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

My Progress (Write notes about what went well, what you'll continue doing, insights you've gained)

Day 1

Day 2

Day 3

Day 4

Day 5

Day 6

Day 7

Day 8



Day 9

Day 10

Day 11

Day 12

Day 13

Day 14

Day 15

Day 16

Day 17

Day 18

Day 19

Day 20

Day 21

Day 22

Day 23

Day 24

Day 25

Day 26

Day 27

Day 28

Day 29

Day 30

Day 31

I'm bringing the following change(s) with me into Month Twelve:

## Month Twelve: Rejoice

I hope you enjoyed our last month's goal, Let Go. I learned that letting go created unexpected peace in your day. Was this true for you, too?

I also hope you're still making space and replacing what doesn't work with what does. And, keep on joining and saving. We're building on the successes and changes of our previous months.

So, here we go for the final month in our year together. Our goal is Rejoice. The goal can be faith-based for you—or not. You can rejoice in what you believe. You also can rejoice because of the positive changes you've made over the past eleven months.

This month, however you do it, it's about rejoicing.

Some ways you can think about “Rejoicing”:

1. You can rejoice in your faith.
2. You can rejoice in your family.
3. You can rejoice in your traditions (new and old).
4. You can rejoice in special times.
5. You can rejoice in knowing your life is perfect in its imperfections.
6. You can rejoice in the support you have and use.
7. You can rejoice in quiet time you create just for you.
8. You can rejoice in your blessings.
9. You can rejoice in your positive changes.
10. You can rejoice in the small miracles present every day for you.
11. You can rejoice in knowing you are exactly where you are meant to be.
12. You can rejoice in upcoming holiday seasons, enjoying the decorations, traditions and opportunities.

You can set one goal or two or more. It's up to you. And, you can choose a goal related to caregiving. Or, not. Again, it's up to you.

Once you decide how you'll rejoice, then:

1. Write it down on the next page.
2. Tell a friend.
3. Keep track of your progress.

My Action(s) for Rejoice:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

My Progress (Write notes about what went well, what you'll continue doing, insights you've gained)

Day 1

Day 2

Day 3

Day 4



Day 5

Day 6

Day 7

Day 8

Day 9

Day 10

Day 11

Day 12

Day 13

Day 14

Day 15

Day 16

Day 17

Day 18

Day 19

Day 20

Day 21

Day 22

Day 23

Day 24

Day 25

Day 26

Day 27

Day 28

Day 29

Day 30

Day 31

Congratulations! You've accomplished so much over the past twelve months. Take a few moments to reflect on how you're different. Share your thoughts on the next few pages. Then, complete the State of Your Happiness on the next page.





## **The State of Your Happiness**

On a scale of 1 to 5, with 1 being the least happy and 5 being the most, how would you rate your overall level of happiness?

Describe a time in your life when you felt happy.

Describe your happiness today.

Your Weight and Height:

Your Blood Pressure:

The date you completed this information:

### About the Author



Denise M. Brown, Professional Caregiving Coach and Speaker, began working with family caregivers in 1990. She was an early developer of online support groups for family caregivers, launching her first in 1996 through her website, Caregiving.com. Through her website, seminars, writings and coaching practice, Denise helps family caregivers and health care professionals find meaning in their caregiving journeys.

To reach Denise, please visit [Caregiving.com](http://Caregiving.com).