

# The Joy Reset: A Mindful Path to Embracing the Positive



***Joy is a sense of contentment, connection and aliveness in the present moment.***

## Components of Joy:

**Presence:** Fully experiencing the moment *without judgment*

**Connection:** To self, others or something greater

**Meaning:** Engaging in what feels purposeful and fulfilling

## Joy is:

- Individually determined
- Not about constant positivity or ecstasy
- Rooted in presence and appreciation
- Able to coexist with difficulties

**What brings us joy matures as we age.** Examples of common sources of joy for midlife women include:

- 8 hours of sleep
- Authentic connections
- Adventure
- Playfulness
- Nature
- Enjoyable self-care
- Goal attainment
- A happy child
- Meaningful work/volunteerism
- Feeling “comfort in our skin”
- Personal growth/discovery
- Female friendships

**Exercise: Journal about “*What brings me joy.*”** Write anything that comes up. Give yourself at least five minutes and keep the list ongoing. (Examples: a bubble bath, a good book, connecting with a friend, walking the beach, spring flowers, a hobby, getting recognized at work, etc.) The “size” of the source doesn’t matter. *It is about how you feel inside.*

## What can block joy?

1. Negativity bias — Our genetic survival disposition to focus on threats to our safety (This was critical in ancient days but when we overly focus on the negative, it blocks joy.)
2. Conditioned beliefs instilled upon you about joy. (i.e., I shouldn't be happy when others are suffering.)
3. Negative thought patterns (i.e., a glass-half-full perspective)
4. Overwhelm — Stress from life, external circumstances
5. Perfectionism — Setting unattainable or unsustainable goals/standards
6. Comparison — You have no idea what's going on inside of other

**Fortunately, joy can be cultivated.** Neuroplasticity shows that *the more we focus on joy, the stronger the neural pathways become to experience it!*

## Mindful Joy Practices:

- **Awareness** — Notice when you are experiencing joy. Pay attention to how it feels in your body, so that you recognize it more when it is happening.
- **Savoring joyful moments** — Prolong the moment. Rather than a “drive by” acknowledgment, pause for 30 seconds to truly feel and absorb joyful moments — a full sunset, the first bite of chocolate, a longer hug with a loved one.
- **Daily Anchors** — Use a simple cue (sunlight, breath, petting a pet) to pause and invite joy.
- **Joy Reflection** — Similar to a gratitude journal, notice and name three small joys daily.

## Steps to Reset Your Joy:

- Clarify what brings you joy.
- Bring it regularly into your life.
- Amplify its presence.
- Be aware of what blocks your joy.
- Choose one or two joy practices to help!

**I'd love to connect!** I'm on Facebook (Embrace the Middle,) Instagram (ShaynaKaufmann), and LinkedIn (Shayna Gothard Kaufmann).

**You can learn more** about Embrace the Middle at [EmbraceTheMiddle.com](http://EmbraceTheMiddle.com)

***Wishing you many moments of joy, today and always!***