

Feeling N.I.C.E.

It is important to choose a work context that nurtures your needs and desires rather than negates them. This helps facilitate you being your best self. Changing your work environment, however, may or may not be practical for you in the short-term. Without overly relying on your work environment, there are also many habits and routines that you can discover and embed into your life to create more favorable conditions. The idea here is to adopt practices that help you consistently feel N.I.C.E. – Nourished, Inspired, Creative, and Energized.

Nourished.

We often neglect activities that support our physical and emotional health. To enact meaningful change in your life, you need your tank to be full. You simply cannot power a significant and sustainable change in your life if you are running low on reserves.

Fill yourself up with all the things and experiences that you find most delicious and delightful in life. Whatever you find makes you feel precious and cared for, give that to yourself.

What can you do to nourish your physical health?

Examples: Mindfully eat and savor healthy, tasty food that goes beyond physical fuel and makes you feel vital and loved. Indulge in a massage. Take yourself to yoga.

What can you do to nourish your emotional/mental health?

Examples: Spend time listening to music you love. Play games with your kids. Curl up on the couch with a cup of hot tea. Soak in a bubble bath. Take yourself on a date with Mother Nature.

Inspired.

Surround yourself with people and influences that lift you up. People who love and accept you and people whom you admire and respect. Gather around the people who know something you want to learn. Stay close to those that ignite your desire to step up into your own power.

Which five people in your life that you spend the most time with?

For each of these five people, estimate the impact of the time that you spend? What percentage is inspiring and what percentage is tiring?

What five sources do you read most often? From where do you receive the bulk of your information and environmental input?

Does engaging with these sources make you feel inspired or tired?

What are five things that you want to learn about, or get better at? Who or what can you bring into your life to help you with this?

Creative.

One mistake that we often make when we consider creativity is that we treat it as something that we are doing. Seen in another light, creativity is more about allowing. So creating the optimal conditions for creativity is often about clearing away mental, emotional, and physical clutter... setting aside that blank space for the new ideas or projects or ventures to be born into.

Embrace the ebb and flow of rest and activity, of incubation and creation. No need to push or try to force things to happen. Make space and time for yourself and creativity will pour out.

What can you do to clear or create more physical space?

Examples: dedicating, decorating, or de-cluttering your workspace

What can you do to clear or create more emotional space?

Examples: confronting insecurities, cutting away from relationships that are draining

What can you do to clear or create more mental space?

Examples: delegating repetitive tasks, asking for expert help, or killing projects or ideas

Energized.

Deliberately put yourself in the presence of opportunities, people, and places that light your inner fire. Whatever makes you feel the most alive, then make it a priority to do that. When we do what makes us feel most alive, we are living fully. From this place, we are effortlessly generative and generous.

What makes you come alive and feel energized?

Examples: Traveling. Trying new restaurants. Volunteering at the local dog shelter. Drawing mandalas. Hosting a party. Giving a speech. Kayaking in the open sea. Tearing downhill on your snowboard. Dancing until you're buzzing from head to toe.

Best Life Budget

Now that we can see how we are supported in ways that extend way beyond money, let's zoom in and get practical in exploring the role that money actually plays in our lives. The same way that we limit ourselves by viewing resources as exclusively – or primarily – financial, we can also limit ourselves when we think about the question of “how much money is enough?”

The idea of enough is, in itself, limiting. It implies that security depends on reaching a single point, beyond which you are okay, and before which you are not okay. The question we might want to ask ourselves is, “enough for what?” Instead of thinking about meeting (or missing) our needs at one specific threshold, let's look at our concept of “enough-ness” as a range of resource requirements.

As an exercise, the table on the next page provides a framework for defining these ranges – with an eye towards creating a more flexible money mindset. There is a listing of categories of typical expenses.

You may choose to add or remove some categories, depending on your current life situation. Some or many categories may fall by the wayside at the lowest end of the range for basic needs.

Consider the dollar amount that you would require for each category, monthly, at each of the levels listed below.

What is enough for meeting your BASIC NEEDS?

At this level, imagine that you have the minimum money required to get by in day-to-day life (although perhaps there is not much extra cushion for unexpected expenses or excess income to put into savings and investment).

What is enough for establishing a state of COMFORT?

At this level, money is not a source of worry. You can indulge in occasional small luxuries and handle financial emergencies. You are saving and investing some for the future.

What is enough for enjoying a sense of DECADENCE?

Here, you have more than enough financial capacity to meet every anticipated material desire, without restriction and without having to consider and weigh the tradeoffs of financial decisions.

On a monthly basis, how much is enough for...

BASIC NEEDS

COMFORT

DECADENCE

Living Space			
Home Care			
Groceries			
Dining Out			
Transportation			
Communication			
Office Expenses			
Entertainment			
Travel / Vacation			
Exercise / Fitness			
Personal Care			
Education			
Clothing			
Household Items			
Charity			
Healthcare			
Insurance			
Retirement/Savings			
Childcare			
Children's Education			
Children's Clothing/Activities			

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Red Threads

The term “red thread” describes something that follows a theme. For instance, if a piece of text has a "red thread," then it's written with a consistent theme that repeats throughout the narrative. The expression originates from Greek mythology where King Theseus found his way out of Minotaur's labyrinth by following a "red thread."

In a similar fashion, there are often many signs in our life that are quietly, yet persistently, pointing us toward passion and purpose – these are clues that we often ignore or overlook when we are fully engaged in automatic mode. This section is designed to help us dig up some threads to pull, for future exploration.

Complete the Sentence

Try to complete each sentence below as many times as you can until you are exhausted of answers. At minimum, try to write at least 3 phrases to complete each sentence stem. You may want to come back and do these sentence completions in several different sittings, as different ideas may come to you at different times.

I get so excited that I can't stop talking when...

I feel the most alive and energized when I am...

People frequently comment or compliment me on...

It is effortless for me (but often hard for others) to...

It breaks my heart / causes me pain when I see...

I have a strong desire to live in the kind of world where...

One activity I want to spend more time doing is...

The accomplishment that I am most proud of in my life is...

I would feel deprived if I could not serve as...

I lose track of the time when I get engrossed in...

Reflection on Direction

Read over the answers that you wrote above. See if you notice any themes, or red threads, and then consider these two questions to help shape a direction for exploration.

What dimensions of myself have I been denying? What desires have I been ignoring?

Where do I want to invest time and energy to expand and explore?

Action Day By Day

When we embark on making a change, it is easy for our best intentions to be overtaken by the gravity of habits and the demands of day-to-day life. One way to ensure that you keep moving toward your ideal life and work is to start with simple, small shifts. These will accumulate and build up your “change” muscles so that you are able to successfully navigate bigger shifts. To make it manageable, start with something you can do for 5 minutes a day.

The other major factor whether or not we are successful in making changes is our level of personal accountability. If you have great dreams for yourself, and you tell no one, then there is no one to hold you accountable. The people in your life who are invested in your freedom and fulfillment can be wonderful allies for you as you embark on your path to meaningful work.

Write down several new habits and rituals that you would like to adopt and integrate into your life. These are practices to help you release old beliefs and behavior patterns, activate your creative energy, connect with abundance, and give yourself space for exploration and experimentation.

Acts of Devotion with Discipline

5 minutes every day

30 min every week

2 hours every month

Commitment to Completion

What is something you will complete and by when? Write it down.

Support System

What habit or ritual you will need ongoing support for?

Who will you ask for this support? By when will you ask?

Accountability Partner

Research shows that we are more likely to follow through on intentions or goals when we write them down. And we are even more likely to achieve our aims when we state them out loud or share them with others.

Copy down your stated acts of devotion and your commitment to completion. Then send it to the person that you named above or share it with another friend, partner, or support figure.