

THE COMPREHENSIVE WELLNESS TOOLKIT

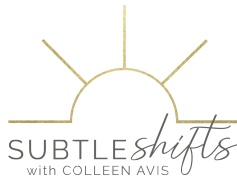
SACRED SPACES



SUBTLE SHIFTS FOR MIND, BODY,
AND HOME TRANSFORMATION

COLLEEN AVIS

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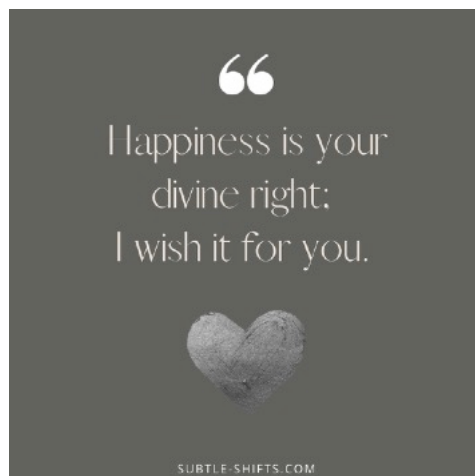


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Pain, setbacks, and trauma are guarantees in life, but suffering is a choice, and the choices we make determine how we grow, learn and evolve. My clawing out of dumpsters and my passion for supporting others to do the same for themselves result from my choices. Unique choices that did not come from one canned approach or any one therapist, experience, training, retreat, coach, or doctor.

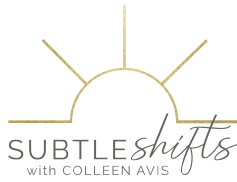
The nonlinear gift of life experiences, multiple steps backward and forward, stops and starts, and repeating the same mistakes, is twisted and messy. As my life coach shared with me, “Colleen, your life is an English garden, yes it’s messy, but oh, it is so beautiful.” She is so right, and I love my magnificently messy garden!

For years, fear, scarcity, abandonment, and victimization occupied the space now filled with awareness of how I arrived here at wholeness and happiness. It wasn’t always easy, but I chipped away at the stories and emotions to re-write my story and honor all my spaces, mind, body, and soul. Because it’s at that intersection that magic grows.



Building a personal wellness toolkit requires reflection, listening, and understanding your unique needs. The key is to start practicing. Practice makes better practice. I invite you to decide to get started creating your wellness toolkit, make a subtle shift, and create the approach that supports you.

Let’s get started!



GO EASY WITH YOURSELF.

Breathe in; breathe out. Slow down and begin to feel into your body and the space you are in right now. Simply breathe in; breathe out.

This is not a race, so invite in the idea and trust that you are enough, complete, and whole exactly as you are.

Because if you are here, you're ready to shift your limiting beliefs, reclaim your sense of self, own and define your purpose, and live with less stress in your life. You realize pushing harder, pushing past, pushing down, pushing through, and pushing away is not creating the results you want. So, shift the need to push and go easy with yourself. It's a powerful tool.

I invite you to listen to the words, expectations, and thoughts you have toward yourself each day. Each cell in our body is like a mini-brain. They listen to our words and actions, soaking them up like a sponge—positive and negative—and disperse them through your mind and body.

To practice going easy with yourself, try one of these ideas each day:

- Take five minutes each day to do less. Don't fret; less is not nothing; less, in this case, is a lot more and allows you to pause to see what's most important.
- Practice doing one thing at a time. That may be sitting down to eat and simply eating, going for a walk without talking on the phone, or having a conversation on the phone without doing the laundry. Enjoy the moment you are in!
- Catch yourself when you hear yourself judging or speaking unkindly to yourself. Then ask yourself, "What would I say to my best friend in this situation?" Then say it to yourself!
- Take the time to transition between activities. Sum up what you completed and gather your inner resources before you shift into the next task.

This list is far from inclusive, so I invite you to pause and write down your unique list.

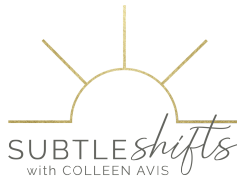
What steps can you integrate that invite in the idea of ease? Borrow some of mine or create your own and invite the subtle shifts to create ripples of wholeness and wellness through your mind and body.

Everyone has a dumpster full of garbage they're working on, but at this moment, you can decide to go easier with yourself and take inventory of what you do have that can create impactful shifts.

The Comprehensive Wellness Toolkit

Sacred Spaces: Subtle Shifts for Mind, Body, Home Transformations

Colleen Avis, www.subtle-shifts.com, 703-732-1007



CELEBRATE WHAT YOU HAVE.

You were born with all the tools you need to live a balanced and joyful life. However, most of us have lost track, misplaced, or given away our tools. So, to build your wellness toolkit, remind yourself, dust off, and reclaim the strengths you already own. We have all lent a neighbor a ladder, coffee pot, folding table, and then when you need it, you can't find it or have to go get a new one.

Well, this is the time to get your tools in order.

- Where are you giving away time to others when you need time to get your own things done?
- Where is saying yes getting in the way of your exercise time?
- How much time scrolling and comparing to others is pulling your mind and energy away from making a healthy lunch?
- What excuses are you making that prevent you from starting a meditation practice for five minutes each morning?

Whether you realize it or not, you are trading this time and space against your wellness toolkit. I invite you to find one or two areas you can reclaim and shift.

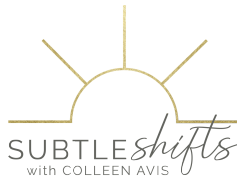
Try this practice. Grab a piece of paper and label five columns with these wellness toolkit components:

- Nourishment
- Emotional Wellbeing
- Physical Movement
- Mindfulness and Meditation
- Connection with Nature

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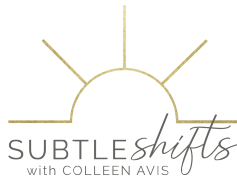


Nourishment	Emotional Wellbeing	Physical Movement	Mindfulness & Meditation	Connection with Nature

For each, list the strengths and tools you have in each column. Considering how your mind, body, and soul are intertwined, it’s normal that some of your tools may fit in multiple categories. Under “Nourishment,” you may list healthy snacking habits, good sleeping habits, or the use of essential oils to help energize you. You may list your daily dog walking under “Physical Movement” and “Emotional Health.” Be creative, and keep adding until it feels complete.

Of course, the list of tools may change because you are constantly changing, as is the world around you. Embrace this as a practice, and revisit this list and modify it as you grow and shifts happen.

Now you have dusted off your tools and reminded yourself of your strengths, spend time practicing them, catching yourself when you use them, and leaning into them when you find yourself going hard on yourself. Give yourself some credit for showing up each day and doing your best! And as my son reminds me, “Gratitude is the best attitude.” Be grateful for what you have.



TAKE A PAUSE.

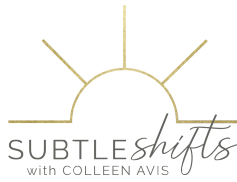
A brief, mindful pause creates space you need to explore your gifts and release what has been getting in the way of what you know you need and will support you.

I invite you to add this brief meditation to your toolkit and use it as often as you need.

- Find a place to sit, close your eyes or take a gentle gaze, and allow yourself to be still.
- Notice your body breathing for you—what a gift. Allow your mind and body to take in these few moments of pause. Nowhere to be; nothing to do.
- Simply observing your breath, in and out, in and out.
- For one minute, gently repeat to yourself:

At this moment, I have everything I need; I go easy with myself.

- When you feel complete, release your repetition, take a few deep breaths, slowly open your eyes.
- Smile and begin your daily activities.



EXPAND YOUR TOOLKIT.

Life is not a one tool kind of job, there will be times when you use one tool more than others, times where you need to create a new tool, and times when you realize an old tool needs to be dusted off to get the job done. Normal day activities, seasonal changes, different times of your life, different times of day impact what tools you need to achieve wellbeing and balance. What works for someone may not work for another. Just like some people like spicy food and others do not, there is not right or wrong too, just the tools that support your unique wellness.

I suggest you start with going easy with yourself and embracing the tools you have. The less you push, honor yourself, and trust you have all you need, the closer you move to the balance and wholeness you deserve.

Let's revisit the Wellness Toolkit components:

- Nourishment
- Emotional Wellbeing
- Physical Movement
- Mindfulness & Meditation
- Connection with Nature

These components create your health and wellness ecosystem. Each influencing the other, creating a ripple effect, offering the ability to nurture your unique needs through awareness and balance.

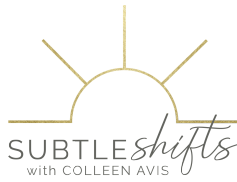
Science tells us that through daily lifestyle choices, you can optimize gene behavior helping “turn on” the genes that provide good health and “turn off” genes that promote illness.

So, you have identified a few tools you already have in place, lets identify areas you feel you are missing or would like more of in your life. As you look through the list below select a few you can try. Remember you are looking for subtle shifts you can practice and commit to everyday. If you get stuck or would like to learn more, set up a 30-minute free wellness consult with me and we can co-create! [Schedule time here.](#)

In the meantime, here are just a few ideas:

Nourishment

When you think nourishment think beyond the food you eat. While the food choices we make are essential, we nourish ourselves through all of our senses. What comes in



through our eyes, ears, nose, skin and perceived energies have an important impact on nourishing our mind, body and soul.

Consider where you can:

- Improve the quality of sleep
 - Go to bed 5-10 minutes early each night until you reach 7-9 hours of sleep
 - Add “legs up the wall” yoga pose to your evening routine to prepare the body for rest
 - Use mindfulness techniques or recapitulate practices before bed each night
- Incorporate natural and holistic remedies for everyday ailments
 - Choose peppermint essential oil to support an upset stomach or headaches
 - Practice pranayama to reset your nervous system
 - Connect with nature, absorb sunlight and touch the earth to help feel more in balance
- Take time to read more books and magazines you enjoy
- Reduce processed foods from your diet
- Dry brush and self-massage offer your body deep nourishment
 - My favorite body oils can be found [here at Banyan Botanicals](#).
- Declutter your spaces – mind, body and home!
- Choose to prepare and enjoy a relaxing bath
 - Add your favorite bath oil and leave the phone in another room
- Consider incorporating more plant-based meals into your week
 - Increase the portion of veggies and fruit to animal products
 - Swap one meal a day to plant-based
- Incorporate more flavors in your meals
 - Think astringent, bitter, pungent – most of us are missing those the most
- Wear colors and fabrics that feel soothing and comfortable
- Drink more water
 - Understand the hydration of your body with [Vivoo](#), my favorite wellness tracking tool can be found [here](#)!
- Trust your 6th sense... Trust your gut! She has great things to share with you.

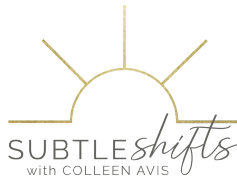
Emotional Wellbeing

Science tells us we have an average of 60,000-80,000 thoughts a day, where 70-80% of those thoughts are negative. Focusing on your emotional wellbeing is essential and can help to reduce and shift all those thoughts! Yes, you have the capacity to shift our stories and beliefs and create healthy emotional space.

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My son recently introduced me to a song “Overthinker” by Inzo, and it starts by saying thinking is “like chatter in the skull, perpetual and repetition of words... we are so tied up in our thoughts we’ve lost our senses.”

How would it feel to reduce the chatter in your head, find balance and ease in your thoughts or eliminate negative self-talk?

Here are a few things to practice as you practice connecting to your senses and reconnecting to yourself:

- Meditate
- Practice gratitude
- Be aware of your emotions and invite or consider a new perspective
- Strive for balance in one or two areas of your life
- Connect with loved ones
- Practice S.T.O.P. (Stop, Take a few breaths, Observe what’s happening, Proceed)
- Express your feelings, honestly
- Surround yourself with positive people
- Exercise
- Limit the time you spend in negative emotions or limiting stories
- Get good sleep
- Eat a healthy diet
- Get curious and find purpose and meaning

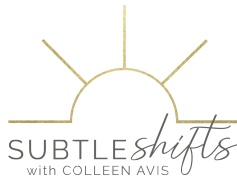
Physical Movement

Our bodies are designed to move, yet modern day lifestyles don’t always prioritize movement. So, remember a few minutes each day is better than none, and finding movement you love will help create a consistent practice.

Physical movement encourages overall wellbeing, supports the absence of disease, and the energy and vibrational quality of movement creates balance that integrates and is intertwined with all areas of your wellness.

So, get creative, vary the intensity, find unique and interesting ways to move that you can fit into your day. How about a few of these ideas:

- Walk in nature
- Practice yoga – Yes you are a yogi! If they can make pizza crust from cauliflower you can do yoga!
 - Join me for an online class. [Go here to take a class.](#)



- Explore the movement of breath and how it and pranayama influence your health
- Stretch
- Find a playground and play. Swing, slide, spin, teeter, hang upside down!
- Take the stairs every time
- Vacuum more often, or any house chore
- Dance... yes dance in the kitchen, in the shower, anywhere!
- Find exercises you can do at your desk
- Sneak in a few jumping jacks in between meetings or daily activities

Mindfulness & Meditation

A regular mediation practice is something I wish for everyone.

Who is not in need of reduced stress, anxiety, better sleep, deeper connection to self, a new perspective or improved overall wellness?

For many of my client's and myself, meditation and mindfulness practices peel back the layers that cloud the view of our true self. These practices allow for a clearer understanding of self, enhanced self-awareness, deeper kindness and compassion, and integration of mind, body and soul.

Adding mindfulness practice is a wellness game changer and ripples through all other areas of your life.

The thought, "I can't meditate", is a result of not getting what you need, or what you think you want, out of the practices you have tried. [So please reach out](#) if you have not yet found a practice that supports you – I would be honored to co-create with you. There are many ways to add mindfulness into your life that do not include sitting perfectly still with hands in a mudra position on the side of a mountain. ☺

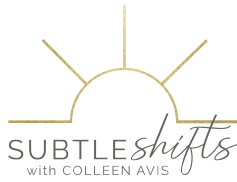
A few mindfulness ideas:

- [Join me on Mondays at 8:30am EST for a free Mindful Monday group practice](#)
- Enjoy a walking meditation
- Practice coffee mediation
- Find presence in a yoga or pranayama practice
- Schedule a 30-minute free consult with me and I will guide you to a mindfulness tool that supports you. [Free consult scheduling here.](#)
- Recapitulate each evening before bed
- Start a morning or evening journaling practice to capture thoughts and feelings, or hopes and dreams
- Walk mindfully each time you walk from your car to the grocery store door

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- Enjoy cloud spotting
- Incorporate mantra meditation into your day
- Spend time focused on the steps needed to prepare your favorite meal
- Bath yourself in music and dance

Connection with Nature

"We are now in the mountains and they are in us, kindling enthusiasm, making ever nerve quiver, filling every pore and cell of us." - John Muir

Nature offers us a constant sense of gratitude, awe and wonder. A constant guide if you take the time to listen and observe. Nature is always in the present moment, so when we connect with her we are sharing in that presences.

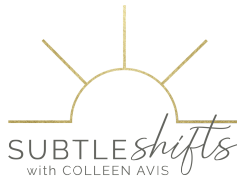
You have access to stillness and the present moment, always, as nature teaches us. Connect with her and you connect with yourself and find balance. Exciting, right!

- Put your bare feet on the ground
- Garden or plant a tree, get your hands in the dirt
- Sit near a stream and throw rocks in the water
- Be alone in nature and tune into the sounds, smells and sights
- Hugs a tree, yes really hug a tree!
- Look to nature each season, watch what she is doing, tap into where she inspires you to transition and acclimate with the seasons
- Bring rocks, leaves, sticks and plants into your home
- Read books about nature, *The Hidden Life of Trees* by Peter Wohlleben, is my all-time favorite!

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ALIGN TO YOUR PURPOSE.

The tools in your toolkit support you best when you have a clear understanding of what you want and what brings you joy. At your deepest core ask yourself:

- what sparks joy for me?
- what makes me smile?
- what am I doing when I feel most in alignment?
- what do others say they see in me that lights me up?

Without knowing your Purpose, without clear intention or clarity of your desired path forward, it is impossible to know when you have moved closer or arrived there.

Why the capital “P” for Purpose? Well... I am glad you asked. I believe we have two main types of purpose. Purpose and purpose!

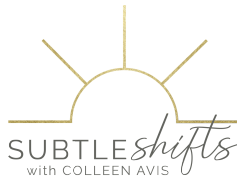
Little “p” purpose is the daily activities we choose, individual roles we play, jobs we take on, the people we align with and where we live. All important and exciting parts of our lives that fill you up with joy when they are in tandem with big “P” Purpose.

Big “P” Purpose is your inner divinity, inner light, and inner most knowing and calling. It has always been there and always will be. It is the place where the answer to the questions, “why am I here?” and “who am I?” are available to you. This Purpose, is most often unheard because we are stuck or worried about the past and future, we push through “what we have to do”, and our efforts and emotions are wrapped up in external distractions and attachments and little “p” purposes.

“

Turn up the volume on your
inner voice. she has amazing
things to tell you.

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This is not to say your little “p” purposes are not important, but consider this... have you ever asked yourself:

- “What am I doing?”,
- “Why do I always feel depleted?”,
- “How is it I am doing all the “things” and I still feel exhausted and numb?”,
- “Is this really all there is to life?”

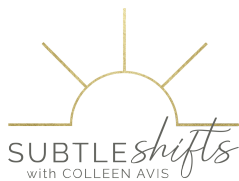
Here’s the deal, when you are missing a deep understanding and clarity of your big “P” Purpose, a knowing of your soul’s desire, you are unable to make choices and decisions that align your little “p” purposes in a supportive and fulfilling way. Put simply, you are in happiness and wholeness when purpose is in alignment with Purpose.

Working with an integrative life coach can help you align, articulate and embody your Purpose. Here are a few ways to get started:

- Spend time journaling on the question: What is my Purpose?
- Explore your interests and try new things
- Find a charity or organization where you feel excited to volunteer your time
- Get curious and ask your friends and loved ones where they see you in your joy and passion
- Reflect on what you are most grateful for in your life

Let the answers to these questions unfold for you naturally taking the time you need. Understanding your Purpose gives you a reason to rise and shine each day, and is a clarifying tool to guide you.

Helping my clients uncover their Purpose is one of my greatest joys, please reach out if I can support you create a clear vision of your unique Purpose. I would be honored to guide you.



“

I've come to realize this truth:
some of the greatest impacts
we can make start with

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The purpose of every relationship, “good” and “bad”, is about learning, growth and knowledge ... this includes the relationship you have with yourself!

So, I invite you to enjoy your journey and don't forget... go easy with yourself.

Thank you for being here, thank you for being you! The concepts and ideas in this document are meant to be only a guide, a resource to support you in identifying what may be the best approach for you.

Remember you are continuously growing and changing, and that means you need to allow space for adaptation and adoption of practices, approaches and tools that support you. Embracing change as an opportunity to evolve in itself is a magical gift in itself.

If getting started, beginning any new practices, identifying what's right for you, or staying accountable is challenging please reach out. I would be honored to support your progress toward a healthier and happier life. If you are feeling pulled to make real lifestyle shifts and to fall in love with your life, I am here to serve and support you.

I would love to talk with you about creating your unique toolkit and explore what makes you your beautiful, unique and divine YOU. For a [free wellness consult](#), including a Dosha (mind body constitution) quiz and time to discuss the results, please sign up on my website: www.subtle-shifts.com

*I wish you love, light and peace.
And remember, always shine bright.
Colleen x*

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