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## Member's Session 2: Set Yourself up for Mind, Body and Soul Success

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Creating a physical and emotional environment conducive for success is absolutely necessary for reaching it. I wouldn't be as healthy as I am today if I stocked my pantry with processed foods, didn't schedule my devotion time and exercise into my week or if I didn't get enough sleep (well...that may be where I'm lacking a little!).

### **Preparation is a MUST when it comes to living well.**

In fact, here's a recent article I posted containing a few of the habits I have that [make living well work for me](#) [1]. Organization and preparation lay the groundwork whether your goal is simply to live well with intention through the holidays or to lose weight or to run a 5K. Even if you're not typically a 'planner', especially during this season of holiday hustle, you'll have to set aside some time to *yourself up for success to really live well*.

I believe there are a few different types of preparation, or ways to set yourself up for success:

## 1. **Preparation of your mind. Developing mindfulness and identifying our truest intentions.**

When you answered the wellness coaching questionnaire in your journal (as suggested in [your first 'session'](#) [2]), you began setting yourself up for success emotionally and intellectually. *Our minds need time to marinate new information.* We need to grow emotionally and spiritually if we want change our physical bodies and lifestyles.

Throughout this process, be sure to revisit and re-assess your answers, consider the direction you'll take for each day and adopt a mindful approach to your eating and exercise activities rather than letting your schedule rule you.

Allow yourself some time to develop ideas and maturity of the mind when it comes to wellness. Challenge your current approach, adopt new perspectives and seek to make purposeful choices as opposed to resigning to instant gratification. That way, you'll prepare yourself to overcome your unique barriers, solve problems and develop your own personal system of living well.

Rather than robotically following a cookie-cutter program requiring no self-awareness, use discernment about what works in your own lifestyle. After all, God created us each uniquely so the way you conduct your wellness won't look like anyone else's!

1. **Set your stage for positive change.** Another more tangible way to set yourself up for success is to create an environment encouraging of good choices. Make living well difficult NOT to do. If you remove the candy bars from your freezer, it won't be so easy to seek stress relief in the Snickers!

In the same way, clean processed foods out of your pantry. Replace them with whole, unprocessed options. Here's an article to help you get started. I like to call it 'purifying your pantry'. Here's an article on [clean eating](#) [3] to help you get started.

Set your workout clothes out the night before, choose a time to exercise, write it in your calendar and create a simple reward system that encourages you to stay on track. For example, you get a new workout top when you have reached your exercise goals for four weeks straight. Positive rewards work for us adults, too!

1. **Socialize your success.** None of us operate in a vacuum. Whether our influences are positive or not, we all sometimes succumb to the world and wants around us. And, believe me, the culture will consume you if you can't stand firm on your own version of living well. I used to mindlessly exercise simply to chase the calories I consumed the night before. And, worse, until recent years, I didn't consider my spiritual and emotional life the foundations of what living well really meant to me. Once I realized that and surrounded myself socially with supportive friends, the way I felt physically was never better!

I put a lot of weight in creating a social support network. And I'd love for you to view Happily Whole as part of yours...I'll keep putting encouragement out there and you keep coming back for more! But additionally, choose a few friends with similar values who can support you in whatever wellness change you're looking to achieve. Tell them about it, share your barriers and your successes and honestly report your progress. God created us to operate in community and in many ways, our culture has lost that value. So, let's bring it back as we focus on living well from the inside out.

1. **Seek soul success.** Quite possibly, this is the key ingredient to living well long term, no matter what your goals. If I want to lose weight but I make food my god by turning to it every time my routine goes array, my soul is grieved and I start on a downward spiral. If my desire is to exercise more to improve my energy but every evening I wallow on the couch watching shows unsavory for my soul, the world's ways will prevail. If I'm hoping to deal with stress more effectively but use

food, drink or anything else as a resolution, I'm missing the root of my soul's issues.

And here's the thing: **God created you to NEED HIM.** So, anytime you make anything other than Him your god, you're headed down the wrong path. Or if you place too much weight on your physical wellness, you make living well your lord and you're leaning on the wrong supports. So, seek soul-health first and God will guide you to what your earthly existence needs to thrive. Use Him as your support in your approach to wellness, just like you would in any other area of your life. So, every morning give it over to Him as you set yourself up for success in all the other areas.

### **ACTION STEPS:**

~**Create a Planning List:** Review your Wellness Coaching Questionnaire from [Session 1](#) [2] and list three goals that you will begin working on. Under each of those goals, write down what you need to do to set yourself up for success. For example, if you are looking to begin eating more real foods and cut out processed foods, maybe your list will look something like this:

Do research on real foods

Remove all boxes and processed foods from my pantry

Make a grocery list of items to replace what I purge from the pantry

Prep healthy snacks ahead of time so I have something to grab when hunger strikes

~**Formalize some Social Support:** Enlist a friend or two to head into the holiday season with. By being open with someone about your goals and committing to sharing your progress, you will be more likely to follow through. These friends should be people you can easily talk to and who you feel will offer support and not judgment.

~**Soul searching:** As I mentioned in the previous wellness coaching article, I will always encourage you to take your process of change to a deeper level. In this instance, I want you to think about how you can give this area of your life over to the Lord just like you would any other worry or challenge. Even if your goal is simply to live well with intention through the holiday season, meditate on or write about how God can be your guide and support. ***Instead of reaching for tangible steps, sometimes all we need to do is reach for His Word or His ear in prayer.*** I'd like you to explore this over the next few weeks.

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### **Links**

[1] <https://www.livinghappilywhole.com/articles/habits-healthy-home/8-easy-ways-i-make-living-well-work>

[2] <https://www.livinghappilywhole.com/articles/live-well-inside-out/session-1-prepare-your-mind-change>

[3] <https://www.livinghappilywhole.com/content/kitchen-clean>