

Hucina Su, MS, BSN, CEC

Intensive Care for the
Nurturer's

Soul

*7 Keys to Nurture Yourself
While Caring for Others*



"This book is a must read for anyone
who is in the role of caregiver."

— Terri Levine, *The Guru of Coaching*®,
best-selling author of *Coaching for Everyone*

Words of Praise for

Intensive Care for the Nurturer's Soul

“This book is a must read for anyone who is in the role of caregiver: nurses, doctors, home health aides, or anyone caring for a loved family member. Hueina Su has done an outstanding job of giving tools and techniques that are practical and highly valuable to caregivers. This book will inspire you as you hear her compassionate voice, giving you hope as well as solutions. Those reading this book can live their lives with deeper personal fulfillment and with more inner peace, ease and joy.”

Terri Levine, Ph.D., MCC, The Guru of Coaching®,
founder of Comprehensive Coaching U, author of
Coaching is for Everyone, www.TerriLevine.com

"Hueina Su has written an excellent book for health care professionals, caregivers and all nurturers. As a public health care and patient advocate, I have worked with many doctors, nurses, cancer survivors and caregivers over the years. I have noticed that, all too often, we health care professionals don't always practice what we preach. As a result, we are very prone to stress and burnout. Hueina's book is a timely reminder for all of us to put our own health and well-being as a top priority, while we attempt to take care of our patients and loved ones. Through her personal story and coaching exercises, Hueina offers patients and

caregivers inspiration, hope as well as practical tools for better self-care, joy and fulfillment."

Ming-der Chang, Ph.D., Vice President of Asian Initiatives, American Cancer Society Eastern, Division, www.Cancer.org

"We caregivers often hear the mantra, 'take care of yourself so you can take care of others.' I say that to others very often, yet until now I didn't really hear the message. Thankfully, I've listened to Hueina Su's wise words, "*intensive self-care is NOT being selfish and it's NOT a luxury*". With her wise guidance in *Intensive Care for the Nurturer's Soul: 7 Keys to Nurture Yourself While Caring for Others*, I've been able to make some immediate and important changes. Self-care is a new path for me but I'm already less stressed, more balanced and on my way to becoming a better caregiver.

Connie Goldman, author of *The Gifts of Caregiving: Stories of Hardship, Hope and Healing*

"Wow! What a wonderful, useful and inspiring book. Although this book was written for caregivers, everyone who reads it will find useful tools to navigate through everyday life, work and family situations. As we move through life, we are all nurturers and caregivers for someone, in some way at some time. This book reminds us that we must not only provide care for others, we must also take excellent care of ourselves. This book provides simple

and practical solutions, support and guidance for all kinds of nurturers - including you!"

Sue Urda, Co-Founder of Powerful You! Women's Network and Author of *Powerful Intentions ~ Everyday Gratitude*, www.PowerfulYou.com

“Hueina Su has written an exciting new book detailing a process by which overwhelmed people can reduce the stress in their lives and maintain a sense of balance. Called *Intensive Care for the Nurturer's Soul: 7 Keys to Nurture Yourself While Caring for Others*, Hueina’s steps to personal fulfillment blend east-west philosophy with practical tips on managing multiple roles at work and at home. This is a must read for the 21st century.”

George J. Juang, MD, FACC, Director of Electrophysiology Laboratory, New York Hospital Queens, New York Presbyterian Healthcare System

“Hueina Su has done an outstanding job in combining her Eastern philosophy, her personal experiences as a nurturer, and her excellent coaching skills into *Intensive Care for the Nurturer's Soul*. Through real-life stories and coaching exercises, she provides inspiration and personalized practical action steps to create a must read for caregivers and helping professionals.”

Bruce D. Schneider, MCC, Founder and CEO of iPEC Coaching, author of *Energy Leadership*:

Transforming Your Workplace and Your Life from the Core, www.iPECcoaching.com

"In my work as a work & life expert for parents and as a mother myself, I've seen so many parents and caregivers suffer from stress and burnout due to lack of self-nurture. Hueina Su's book offers much-needed inspiration and practical strategies for all parents and caregivers to nurture themselves, so they can have more to give to their loved ones. She shares her personal journey with authenticity and compassion. It resonates with your soul, and gives you the permission and encouragement to honor and nurture your self."

Natalie Gahrman, MA, PCC, CUCG, Author of *Succeeding as a Super Busy Parent*, www.superbusyparent.com

"*Intensive Care for the Nurturer's Soul* is an important book. We are all nurturers and caretakers in some way, shape or form. It is more obvious in times of crisis. Hueina Su provides both a loving and practical roadmap on how to care for ourselves while caring for others. The book is filled with valuable tools and techniques to help us avoid burnout and maintain balance during the most difficult times of our lives. We all can use the encouragement and direction that this book offers."

Alan Gettis, Ph.D., author of *Seven Times Down*, *Eight Times Up* and *The Happiness Solution*:

Finding Joy & Meaning In An Upside Down World,
www.DrGettis.com

“The world needs more advocates for intensive self-care like Hueina! The importance of self-nurturance is a powerful message that millions of women around the globe need to hear. Thanks to books like *Intensive Care for the Nurturer’s Soul*, more and more women have the opportunity to transform their lives by receiving support for putting themselves and their emotional and physical well-being first!”

Renee Peterson Trudeau, author of *The Mother’s Guide to Self-Renewal: How to Reclaim, Rejuvenate and Re-Balance Your Life* and president, Renee Trudeau & Associates, www.ReneeTrudeau.com

“As a recognized expert in the field of self-care for caregivers, Hueina Su writes eloquently about the need for caregivers to nurture themselves with the same commitment, passion, and soul that they nurture others. She offers practical advice, personal experience, and compelling reasons to make self-care a priority. This book is a fabulous contribution and one I will be enthusiastically sharing with my clients and colleagues.”

Corrie Woods, author of *The Woman’s Field Guide to Exceptional Living*, and women’s self-care coach, www.womansfieldguide.com

“The love one shares with others starts from a seed of self-love and it grows endlessly to enrich others. Every day, parents instinctively nurture their children as all animals do. However, Hueina shows you how to extend the love towards work and caring for others outside of family. She introduces ways to first achieve inner happiness and therefore bring happiness to others. I feel this book is really a guide book for everyone who cares about others, a professor mentoring a student, a master guiding an apprentice, and surely a caregiver for a patient. This book should be an owner's manual for life.”

Shih-Fen Chow, MD, Board of Advisors, American
Cancer Society Eastern Division - Asian Initiative

“I felt like this book was meant for me. Hueina Su has captured the essence of a caretaker’s role through her own experiences as an older sibling, nurse and mother. Her insightfulness sheds light on the relationships we take on in all the roles we play. This book is a must read for the caretakers of the world or who rely on caretakers to take care of their needs.

Hueina Su’s ability to take a look at our own roles and how they play out in our relationships is the first step for change to occur. She continues to provide samplings of ways you can support that change for yourself to bring greater balance and substance into your life and into the lives that we live.”

Linda Mitchell-Dominguez, Founder & Executive Director of Holistic Mentorship Network and MARCI magazine, www.HolisticMentorshipNetwork.com

“Hueina Su speaks with an authentic voice about the struggles that nurturers face. Drawing from her years of practical experience, she has created an inspiring guide that gives us permission to care for ourselves as well as suggestions for the ways in which we can accomplish that.”

Dawn Noble and Kathy Smyly Miller, Founders of Wellness Possibilities, www.WellnessPossibilities.com

“Intensive Care for the Nurturer's Soul fills a much-needed market niche. Caregivers will find the author's advice practical, yet heartfelt. She guides the reader with 'baby steps' that are achievable by anyone involved in caregiving. Caregivers will know instantly that Hueina Su understands them and the difficult journey they are traveling.”

Christine Spear, Editor in Chief, Silk Purse Women magazine, www.SilkPurseWomen.com

“As both a caregiver and someone who worked in the medical profession for over two decades, Hueina's sage advice resonates deeply with me. *Intensive Care for the Nurturer's Soul* is a welcome lifeline for those of us who

daily give so much of ourselves to others. Hueina's prescription for self-care is powerful medicine that will not only support us in nurturing ourselves, but will also help us to more fully honor and serve those for whom we care.”

Ellen Britt, PA, Ed.D., Internet Marketing Strategist
and Co-founder of Marketing Qi,
www.MarketingQi.com

“Drawing on the rich cultural heritage of her Chinese family, Hueina Su artfully tells her story of love, family, relationships and the essence of the nurturer's soul.

By blending heartfelt anecdotes of her personal experiences, Hueina conveys her words of encouragement much the way you could imagine her caring for the most delicate patient.

By conveying a message of self-love, including exercises in recognizing one's needs, the author successfully brings her skills as a daughter, mother, nurse and certified life coach to the reader in a relaxed style that is sure to bring wisdom, strength and comfort to the reader.”

René Cantwell, Founder, Families of Loved Ones
magazine (strategies and resources for caregivers)
www.FamiliesOfLovedOnes.com

"Hueina and I share a similar philosophy that self-care is not selfish, but serves the highest good of all. A healthy life

offers a balance of give and take; of giving and receiving support. This is especially true to caregivers, parents, and anyone in a helping or healing profession. And yet many of us stumble on the "Yes, but how?" question. Hueina's book and experience provides a clear path for implementing this philosophy of self-care into practical steps, a pathway to balance and restoration. We can all benefit from her loving message, one that has the power to transform individual relationships as well as our society as a whole."

Karly Randolph Pitman, writer, speaker and founder of Firstourselves.com, author of *Heal Your Body Image: An Inspiring, Step-by-Step Guide to Loving Your Body*, *Overcoming Sugar Addiction*, and the upcoming *The Soul of Motherhood: Mothering our Children; Mothering Ourselves*



A gift for:



From:



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Nurturer's Soul

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7 Keys to Nurture Yourself
While Caring for Others

Hueina Su, MS, BSN, CEC

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Dedication

I dedicate this book to my parents Dr. & Mrs. Sheng-Chieh and Chang Chiao-Shing Su. Thank you, Mom and Dad, for always loving and nurturing me. I'm who I am today because of you.



Acknowledgments

I'd like to thank my husband C. Carey Yang for always loving, supporting, and believing in me. Thank you for loving me for who I am, and allowing me to continue to learn, grow, and transform myself. And most of all, thank you for dreaming with me.

A heart-felt thank-you to my mentor, friend and coach Terri Levine. Without your vision and encouragement, I wouldn't have been able to write this book and bring it to fruition. I extend my deepest and most sincere appreciation to you, Terri, for your guidance, support and for always believing in me.

A big hug and thank-you to my good friend Christina Genest for your help with editing this book. Thank you so much for your tireless patience, impeccable attention to details, and all your hard work. You helped me birth this book! I can't even begin to express what you and your continued support mean to me.

I'd like to thank my good friend Sarita Felder. Thank you for your friendship and your great input in the design process of the book cover. I so enjoy brainstorming with you, and appreciate having you in my life.

Thank you also to my good friend Lois Davis for helping me edit this book. You are always so caring and supportive. I appreciate your cheering for me over the years.

Special thank you to Becky Hannah for your wonderful proofreading and editing work, and to photographer Doug Zackers for my fabulous portraits.

Last but not least, a heart-felt thank-you and many hugs to my cousin Grace Liu. I'm grateful for your friendship, inspiration and love. You've always been one of my biggest fans. Thank you so much for being on this journey with me!



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Foreword

For more decades than I care to count, most of the stresses my family, clients, friends, and I encountered involved caring about someone or something too much, or needing care-giving. Hueina Su has beautifully birthed an idea that addresses the needs of caretakers of the world.

When Hueina asked if I would write her foreword it was an opportunity to look back on my life and reflect upon our first meeting, and what led to that for each of us. Like Hueina, my first career and passion was nursing. Nursing for me was and is a mixture of supportive, loving, compassionate care through troubles and a lot of coaching without necessarily calling it that. Extreme care-taking would be another term for the package that is nursing.

Care-taking spilled over to all other life activities for me. When I went on to become a holistic health educator, medical intuitive, psychic, animal communicator, and psychic detective (probably the most stressful of my

work), I simply began taking care of others from my home or theirs. When filming for an A & E special, *Mediums*, (this show is still playing on TV around the world, yippee!), it was very important to me that the crew felt at home. The caretaker in me wanted to serve them all well and make sure we, as a team, were happy and comfortable with each other. One day, I noticed a limp and a grimace in one person, so I began asking and found that she was in pain and scheduled for surgery. I offered some help which she gratefully took. Caretaker at work with cameras waiting. One film crew for the *Psychic Detectives* documentaries told me I was voted the easiest in my category to work with.

My own life as a multi-tasking nurse, healer, educator, author, illustrator, psychic detective, wife, mother, grandmother and more is overflowing with things to accomplish. I strive to focus on caring for self and others at the same time. Not always easy with my life-long habits of putting others first. While I tell others to care for themselves, Hueina Su's book is the perfect gift to them and to me. Hueina epitomizes what I attempt to be, and that is one of many reasons why her book is long-awaited help for me and other caregivers.

Hueina is, like myself, an adventurer who loves discovering new abilities. With her Black Belt in Tae Kwan

Do among many of her achievements, she appears to calmly glide through each task to tackle, each need to meet, each situation that comes her way, and meet the moment gladly and gracefully. She embodies what she writes about, and exudes peace that calms everyone around her. She is a beautiful Nurturer who also nurtures herself.

Since our first meeting through our dear friend, Christina Santiago, Hueina has become part of a wonderful team of healers helping others with aromatherapy as practiced in the French model. She added aromatherapy as an effective tool to help her coaching clients relieve stress, nurture themselves, and heal both emotionally and physically. With enthusiasm, quiet listening and much studying, Hueina quickly became an important fountain of knowledge in the subject for those around her. I've never seen her drained from her tasks at hand, whether it is her coaching, sharing healing information, or caring for her adorable children and her great husband, she truly embodies a model of taking care of self while caring for others. There is something so powerful about the ability to reinforce our own beliefs through reading and hearing someone so devoted to the need in all of us for self-care. That is why this book glows with truth and resonates so easily for all of us.

Our world is fast-paced and laced with a tremendous volume of constant information flow. The need to center ourselves, catch our breath and release the stress is probably more crucial than ever. How are we to accomplish this when we are faced with the overwhelming need to make a difference in others? Hueina's book comes at the perfect timing. *Intensive Care for the Nurturer's Soul* is a definitely gentle loving breeze with a clear and strong message effortlessly delivered. As I read her ideas, told in a wonderful story-telling style, it was easy to reinforce the truth that has motivated this book: caretakers need to take care of themselves. While we all know this, most of us (me included) don't always practice what we believe to be true. We need help and we need it in a way that is easy for us to use. Just read one small but potent piece to know why you will remember what Hueina tells us.

" Intensive Self-Care is NOT being selfish and it's NOT a luxury, but rather an essential practice for your survival and overall well-being."

It resonates with our souls. That simple, pure, loving statement brings me a sigh of relief. It is okay to reprioritize, and for that and more I have gleaned as I read. I know that she has clearly embarked on a path to help us all continue our paths as healers while caring for ourselves -- the perfect mixture for a successful life.

In the light of love,

Nancy Orlen Weber, RN

Co-founder of the nonprofit Holistic Alliance International,
nurse, holistic health educator, internationally renowned
medical intuitive, speaker, and author of *Psychic Detective:
True Stories and Exercises For The Soul*,
www.NancyOrlenWeber.com



How to Use This Book

I wrote this book for all the Nurturers out there. From my years of coaching and counseling experiences, I share with you the top 7 keys to help you nurture yourself, while caring for others. In this book I share many of my stories as well as those of my clients. Please note that some of the names and personal information mentioned in this book have been changed to protect the privacy of my clients.

It is my hope that the stories, principles and strategies shared in this book will inspire and empower you to better nurture yourself, as you continue to care for others. Sometimes, just one idea can dramatically improve your life. However, it's not how many new ideas you can learn from this book that will change your life. **What will make a real difference is how many ideas you can put into *action* in your life.**

In coaching we always emphasize the importance of making a commitment, taking action and having

accountability. At the end of each chapter I include a self-coaching session to further your learning and help you develop a few action steps to move toward your goals. There are also many resources on my website to further support you. I hope you will make a commitment today to take good care of yourself, and take action to create the life you truly deserve.



You are a Nurturer

To keep a lamp burning we have to keep putting oil in it.

-- Mother Teresa

Your Many Roles as a Nurturer

Chances are, if you are reading this book, you probably see yourself as a **Nurturer** in some way. Perhaps you are a professional Nurturer, such as a nurse, doctor, dentist, or other healthcare and holistic health professional. Perhaps you play a nurturing role in your career, such as a psychotherapist, social worker, teacher, nursing home staff, home health aide. Perhaps you are a Nurturer in your personal life, for example, a parent,

“There are only four kinds of people in this world: those who have been caregivers, those who currently are caregivers, those who will be caregivers, and those who will need caregivers.” -- Rosalynn Carter

grandparent, family caregiver, sister, friend, volunteer at a shelter, etc.

Only Four Kinds of People

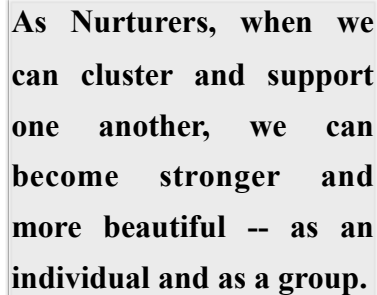
Even if you are not caring for an aging parent, special needs child, or a family member who is ill, you could still be a caregiver. It's been estimated that only 10 to 20 percent of those requiring care in the U.S. receive it in institutions, which means family members or friends shoulder most of the caregiving tasks at home. In her book, *Helping Yourself Help Others*, Rosalynn Carter (wife of former president Jimmy Carter) stated, "*There are only four kinds of people in this world: those who have been caregivers, those who currently are caregivers, those who will be caregivers, and those who will need caregivers.*" That pretty much covers *everyone* in the world! Mrs. Carter asserted that almost everyone has experience in caregiving, although the degree of involvement is different. For example, you may not be the primary caregiver for your aging parent, but you are still providing caregiving by calling or visiting to check in on them. Or, maybe your neighbor suddenly became ill and you brought her a meal or two to tide her over. Or, perhaps you regularly volunteer at nursing homes, soup kitchens, and/or shelters.

If you identify with one or more of the roles above, you are a Nurturer and this book is for you. As a

professional life coach and wellness consultant, I work primarily with healthcare professionals and other Nurturers, helping them relieve stress, nurture themselves and create balance and peace in their lives. I teach my clients principles, skills and strategies of **Intensive Self-Care**, through one-on-one coaching, workshops and teleclasses, for example. This book is based on what I've been teaching my clients and my students over the years.

Delicate Yet Unbreakable

I chose Chinese plum blossoms as part of the design of the book cover because plum blossoms share some characteristics with Nurturers. Plum blossoms are the Chinese national flower. They look like cherry blossoms, except they bloom in the winter. The colder the winter is, the more beautifully they blossom. It is said that they were chosen as the national flower of China because of their resilience and perseverance.



As Nurturers, when we can cluster and support one another, we can become stronger and more beautiful -- as an individual and as a group.

The delicate beauty, unbreakable resilience, and incredible inner strength of plum flowers remind me of

Nurturers. At the first glance they look alike, but, just like the snow flakes that fall upon them, each plum flower is uniquely beautiful. The flowers cluster to form a breathtaking “sea of flowers.”

As Nurturers, when we can cluster and support one another, we can become stronger and more beautiful -- as an individual and as a group. Plum flowers may look delicate, but, they grow from a tree that’s firmly and deeply rooted. Just like Nurturers, who are unwaveringly rooted... in love.



My Story

Destined to Nurture

I was destined to be a Nurturer. To tell you my story, I must tell you about my family. We have a long tradition of being professional Nurturers -- four generations to be exact. My great grandfather (my mom's grandfather), my grandfathers from both sides, my dad, several uncles and both of my brothers-in-law are medical doctors. My mom, my younger sister Phoebe and I are nurses. My youngest sister Gloria is a medical researcher. Three of our cousins are dentists. I wouldn't be surprised if one of our offspring goes into medicine or nursing in the future.

As I said, I was destined to be a Nurturer. Since childhood, I've had plenty of role models to learn from. My sisters and I were always playing "doctors and nurses". We lived in a small town in Taiwan. Our home was above Dad's clinic. I watched my parents take care of their patients every single day. Even when they were extremely tired, they were always kind and vigilant in their care for

them. In fact, at times they were so focused on treating their patients that they neglected to take care of themselves. I remember Dad often missed his meals, worked way into the wee hours, and had to wake up in the middle of the night for emergencies. As an OB/GYN, it came with the territory. Because of his dedication, his patients all loved him and he is very proud of that. However, he hardly ever had time to relax or pursue any hobbies (and I know for a fact that he used to have many).

All Work, No Play

Dad always told me to work hard and you shouldn't play until all work is done. Since his work was almost never done, he hardly ever allowed himself to relax or have fun. As a child, I often wondered whether it was healthy to work so hard without proper rest and relaxation. My philosophy back then was more like "work hard, play hard". Of course, that didn't sit well with my dad. Now that I think about it, even as a young child I instinctively knew the importance of balancing work and play, and taking care of myself. Unbeknownst to me, a tiny seed was planted then for me to dedicate my career to share this message with the world.

A People-Pleaser was Born

As the eldest of three daughters, I was told to be the caretaker of everyone. I was told to let anyone younger

than I to go first. I always had to share my toys and favorite foods with my younger sisters and cousins. If I showed any reluctance to share or take care of others first, I was told that I was selfish. My mom was always taking good care of *everyone* around her, sometimes to the point of sacrificing her own needs and well-being. My dad always said that mom is the role model for the three of us, but none of us is half as good as she is. I felt extremely guilty whenever I wanted to just relax, have some time for myself, or do what I enjoyed *first* instead of taking care of others or finishing all the work. For fear of being called selfish again, I overcompensated and became a people-pleaser, for which I paid a huge price in both my personal and professional relationships and career success. It wasn't until years after studying psychology and coaching that I was able to understand and modify my own self-defeating behaviors and underlying beliefs. Even now, I still catch myself. The difference is, instead of going down the old beaten path, I am now able to identify and quickly change my thoughts and behaviors, and choose the ones that support me.

My Epiphany

My epiphany came when we had just moved to Texas due to my husband's new job, and I had a home-based business then. My daughter was almost three and my son was around six months old. During our first winter there, both my son and daughter came down with bronchitis

at the same time. They were simply miserable. Of course, being a good mother, I immediately took them to the pediatrician, received the diagnosis, got the prescriptions, and took care of them night and day. As you can imagine, it was no fun taking care of two sick children all by myself. With no family around, I was the only caretaker for them. It took them a couple of weeks to recover. In the meantime, I started coughing myself, and it got worse and worse. My chest hurt terribly. It felt like someone had punched me and knocked all the air out of me. I felt totally exhausted. However, I still forced myself to get out of bed every day to take care of my babies, especially my son whom I was still nursing at the time. I was so worried about my children that I totally overlooked my own symptoms. In the end, I coughed for more than a month until I recovered on my own. Believe it or not, it was then that I *finally* realized that I had been suffering from bronchitis, too! How could I have missed that?! I'm a nurse, for God's sake! And guess how much business I did in that month? Not much at all. I was barely surviving.

I learned a valuable lesson from that experience, and vowed never to do that again. It just goes to show you that doctors and nurses don't necessarily make the best patients, or follow their own advice. I realized the importance of taking good care of myself if I were to be a good wife, mother, and business owner. From my personal

experiences and observations, I know that many medical professionals, moms, and caregivers have similar self-care challenges, either due to their caregiving responsibilities, limiting beliefs or negative self-talk that do not support their well-being. This is why I choose to dedicate my coaching practice to help the Nurturers relieve stress, create balance and nurture themselves. I firmly believe that whether you are trying to succeed as a caregiver

I firmly believe that, whether you are trying to succeed as a caregiver or at your career, when you can effectively reduce stress and care for yourself, you will have more assets to succeed in your endeavors.

or at your career, when you can effectively reduce stress and care for yourself, you will have more assets to succeed in your endeavors.



Self-Care Deficiency Syndrome

A New Epidemic

It came to my attention a few years ago that more and more people are suffering from what I call ***Self-Care Deficiency Syndrome***. I see it in my coaching clients, colleagues, business contacts, friends, family, and in many real-life stories I've heard and read. As a matter of fact, it's safe to argue that it has reached epidemic proportion.

We all need a certain level of self-care to maintain our physical, emotional and spiritual well-being. For example, we need sufficient sleep, healthy food, clean water, and preferably regular exercise to stay physically healthy. How about emotional and spiritual health? A supportive network of friends and family, satisfying career, spiritual practice and community, hobbies and other fun activities, opportunities to grow and utilize your gifts and talents, living a life aligned with your purpose and passion, are a few (but not all) factors that can help you maintain emotional and spiritual health.

In an ideal world, everyone would put self-care as one of their top priorities and be able to maintain physical, emotional and spiritual well-being most of the time. Sadly, in the frenzied, non-stop modern world, everyone (even young children) is under a tremendous amount of stress and there never seems to be enough time. When you are under stress, it's even more important to amp up your self-care practice to counter-balance the extra demands. The ironic reality is, if you are like most people, self-care is probably the first thing you let go when you are pressed for time. Over time, you will suffer from Self-Care Deficiency Syndrome.

Signs and Symptoms

So, what is Self-Care Deficiency Syndrome? Simply put, it's a collection of symptoms people display when they do not receive sufficient self-care. Some of the classic signs and symptoms are:

- 1) **Physical** -- frequent headaches, tension and/or pain in the neck, shoulder, back or other areas, digestive problems, racing heart rate, elevated blood pressure, difficulty falling sleep or sleeping too much, lost appetite or overeating, always feeling tired, frequent colds and flu, significant weight gain or weight loss, other minor or major physical dis-ease. When you ignore these physical signals your body is sending you, it has to “up the ante”

and send stronger signals to get your attention. **Research has repeatedly shown that chronic stress is linked to elevated risks of all major diseases such as heart disease, high blood pressure, diabetes, obesity and even cancer.** Many women skip their annual physical or mammogram, which could result in missed early diagnosis of a major illness.

- 2) **Mental** -- declined memory (not related to old age), loss of concentration, being forgetful, disorganized, absent-minded, feeling scattered and unable to stay productive, even tasks that were usually easy for you become difficult. You might procrastinate on tasks that you know are important, but feel too overwhelmed to do. These symptoms can cause decreased productivity, which in turn might cause more problems at work.

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- 3) **Emotional** -- a general sense of unhappiness, feeling overwhelmed, depressed, hopeless, irritable, angry, resentful, feeling like a victim, losing temper easily, impatient, losing interest in things that you usually enjoy, withdrawing socially, anxiety attack, even clinical depression or nervous breakdown.
- 4) **Relationship** -- If you are a caregiver who lack self-care, you might feel drained from the caregiving relationship and even feel resentful toward the person(s) you are taking care of. If you are stressed from other sources such as work, you might damage your relationship at home because of the emotional symptoms described above.
- 5) **Unhealthy Coping Behaviors** -- such as smoking, drinking, drugs, emotional eating, temper tantrums, gambling, other addictive or self-destructive behaviors. All these behaviors can cause more problems in your physical and emotional health, relationships, work and/or finance.
- 6) **Financial** -- If you engage in unhealthy coping behaviors mentioned above, get sick due to lack of self-care, or severely lose productivity at work, you can potentially suffer great financial loss as a result.

Are You an Unsuspecting Victim?

Let me ask you: How many of these symptoms do YOU have? When I present this in my workshops and classes, my audience often comes to a rude awakening that they have many of these symptoms. Many come to tell me that they didn't realize that they are already burned out, and they feel profound sadness that they have let themselves go to such extent. I always assure them that it's totally normal that they feel this way. And, it's totally understandable if you, too, feel this way.

First Step to Wellness

The good news is, self-awareness is the first step of any positive change. Now that you know you are suffering from *Self-Care Deficiency Syndrome*, and the long-term consequences you will face if you don't do anything about it, you can start making positive changes.

The great news is, from this book you will learn many principles, tips and strategies that will help you reduce stress, nurture yourself, create more joy, balance and inner peace in every area of your life.



From Self-Sacrifice to Self-Love

Heal yourself first, before you heal others.

-- African Proverb

Mom's Advice

I remember vividly the day I told Mom that I was pregnant with my first child. My mom was overjoyed. This would be her very first grandchild and it meant the world to her. She congratulated me, and then she said something that stunned me. “Be prepared to give up at least ten years of

Intensive Self-Care Tip: Manage your energy level by taking mini energy breaks throughout the day, and on a weekly basis. Visit www.RxForBalance.com for a FREE Intensive Self-Care Kit, including the Intensive Self-Care Workbook, audio recording, and other bonus materials.

your life for this baby.” My first response was, “Sacrifice ten years?!! Um, how about me? How about *my* own life?”

Back then, I was approaching 30, loved my career, and had no intention of being a stay-at-home mom (although later on I did stay home for a few years and I would never trade anything for those years with my children). I know my mom was simply telling *her* truth. That’s how she lives her life as a mother and wife. However, the concept of “sacrificing” ten or more years of my life was such a foreign idea to me that it shocked me, intellectually and emotionally, to the core. To me, this self-sacrifice parenting model sounds too “all or nothing.” Even as inexperienced as I was, I knew instinctively that it’s not good for my overall well-being. I remember thinking to myself, “Is this really the only way? Why can’t I have my baby, my career AND my life?”

Self-Sacrifice as a Virtue

If you know anything about Chinese culture, you know that self-sacrifice is highly admirable, even expected, especially for women. Men are also expected to self-sacrifice, but usually only for a higher cause, like family honor, the emperor, or their country. The bottom line is, most people avoid being perceived as selfish at all costs, and they put their own happiness and self-worth at the mercy of others.

I was reminded of the virtue of self-sacrifice a few months ago when we installed satellite TV in order to watch Chinese programs. My ulterior motive was to spark an interest in Chinese language and culture in my children, by exposing them to Chinese TV programs. Well, the jury is still out on that one, but I did get some insights from the Chinese soap operas that I'd like to share with you.

My husband and I were watching this show about a group of young people who have complicated relationships -- you know, A loves B but B loves C, that sort of thing. Some of them are secretly loving someone, but wouldn't express their feelings, because they think "the other person" is better at providing happiness for the person they love, and therefore they should sacrifice themselves for the best interest of the one they love. Of course, there's all the guilt, should's, insecurity, shame, fears and regrets entangled with love. All of them act like they are not worthy of love, and their happiness and self-worth are entirely dependent on whether or not they receive the love from someone else.

"Oh, come on!!!," I exclaimed in disbelief, "This is the 21st Century! They are still showing this kind of story on TV??!!!" I was all wound up. My husband just shrugged.

After 20 years of living in the U.S., counseling and coaching countless people, I know that the Chinese are not the only group who think and behave in this way. The fact is, we are all more alike than different from each other.

Looking for Love in the Wrong Place

This reminds me of a story that Don Miguel Ruiz (author of "*The Four Agreements*") told in his book "*The Mastery of Love*." In the story, a man and a woman are in love. They love, respect and appreciate each other for who they really are. They have fun and enjoy their time together. There is no envy, jealousy, and no attempt to control or possess each other. Then one day, the man's heart is so full of love and joy that a miracle happens. When he looks at the beautiful night sky, he finds the brightest, most beautiful star. His love is so big that the star descends and lands on the palm of his hand. At that moment, his soul merges with the star. He is so happy that he can't wait to see the woman and put the star in her hand to prove his love for her.

However, when he puts the star in her hand, she feels a moment of doubt. This love is too overwhelming. The moment she feels this, the star falls from her hand, and breaks into a million little pieces. The man is heart-broken, and swears that love doesn't exist. The woman is heart-

broken too, for she has lost the paradise she once had, due to a brief moment of doubt.

Who made the mistake? Don Miguel Ruiz argued the mistake was on the man's part, thinking he could give the woman his happiness (the star). The truth is, happiness can only come from

The truth is, happiness can only come from within us, not outside of us. You will never be happy unless you have enough love for yourself.

within us, not outside of us. The man and woman had been happy before because of the love inside of themselves. **As soon as he puts his star in her hand, he makes her responsible for his happiness, and nobody can be responsible for another person's happiness.** That's why she has the moment of doubt and breaks the star.

The truth is, you will never be happy unless you have enough love for yourself. Sadly, most of us are like the man in the story, trying to give our precious star to someone else, and desperately hoping they will love us back and make us happy.

Intensive Self-Care

Instead of looking outward for love, I invite you to practice *Intensive Self-Care*, which is an act of self-love. What is Intensive Self-Care? I define it as taking good care of yourself physically, mentally, emotionally and spiritually. It includes (but is not limited to) beliefs and behaviors such as loving and accepting yourself unconditionally, respecting yourself, honoring your own needs, having regular "Me Time" for yourself, doing the things you enjoy, eating a balanced diet, having enough sleep, exercising regularly, having annual physicals, enjoying quality relationships (family, friends, colleagues, life coach, mentors) that support you, learning something new and exciting, managing your time according to your core values and priorities, knowing how to ask for what you want, asking for help when you need it, honoring and pursuing your dreams, knowing how to say "No," and standing up for yourself, etc.

Intensive Self-Care is NOT being selfish and it's NOT a luxury, but rather an essential practice for your survival and overall well-being.

Put on Your Own Oxygen Mask

Intensive Self-Care is NOT being selfish and it's NOT a luxury, but rather an essential practice for your survival and overall well-being. It's especially critical if you are in a nurturing role, either in your personal or professional life. It's like putting on your own oxygen mask FIRST before you help others put on theirs, when the plane hits turbulence in mid-air. You wouldn't be of much use to your loved ones if you didn't put on your own oxygen mask first and then passed out.

Research has repeatedly shown that chronic stress is linked to a host of physical and emotional symptoms and many major diseases. As a Nurturer, if you do not make a point to renew and recharge yourself, you will most likely end up stressed out, burned out, or having a physical and/or emotional breakdown. When you do, *everyone* you take care of will suffer with you.

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Keys to My Success and Happiness

Over the years, as a mom of two, and having worked in many industries including nursing, counseling, coaching, education, nonprofit and small business, I have found that learning to practice Intensive Self-Care is one of the most important keys to my personal and professional success, life balance, and happiness. This is why I chose to dedicate my coaching practice in helping Nurturers learn the Intensive Self-Care principles and incorporate the self-care practices in their daily lives.

So, how do you practice Intensive Self-Care? First of all, get clear on your core values. What are your most important values and how are you honoring them in your life right now? In an ideal world, how would you like to nurture yourself physically, emotionally, spiritually? In reality, what does your self-care practice look like? Also

As a Nurturer, if you do not make a point to renew and recharge yourself, you will most likely end up stressed out, burned out, or having a physical and/or emotional breakdown. When you do, *everyone* you take care of will suffer with you.

ask yourself, “What are my **non-negotiable self-care practices?**” These are the absolute MUSTS for you. For example, it could be reading, journaling, yoga, exercise, meditation, bubble bath, monthly girls’ night out, yearly physical check-up, massage, manicure, or pursuing a hobby. It could be as simple as enjoying your favorite cup of tea each morning, or spending 15 minutes to just sit and breathe, or do nothing at all. It’s YOUR choice.

Asking yourself these questions will give you clarity on what’s important to you and show you the gap between your ideal and current self-care practices. **Please remember the purpose of this exercise is to bring awareness, NOT for you to judge yourself and beat yourself up for not taking better care of you.** Awareness is the first step to any positive changes. Once you have a good assessment of your current and ideal self-care practices, you can then design action steps toward better self-care and overall well-being.

If you are at the point of burnout, you might feel that there is an enormous gap between your current situation and your ideal self-care practice. You might even feel overwhelmed or hopeless about making any changes. Please know that it is totally normal to feel this way. A journey of a thousand miles begins with one step. **Take one**

baby step today and every day, and you will slowly but surely move toward wellness, peace and joy.

Take a few minutes now to answer the questions in the self-coaching section. They will help you gain clarity and take action today to start nurturing yourself on a regular basis.

* In an ideal world, how would I like to nurture myself physically, emotionally and spiritually?

* In reality, what am I doing on a regular basis for my physical, emotional and spiritual well-being?

* What are my **non-negotiable self-care practices**?

* Bridging the Gap -- If there is a gap between your ideal and current self-care practices, ask yourself, “What action steps am I willing to commit to take next week? Next month?” Be specific about what you are committed to do, and put a deadline on your action.

* What can I de-clutter from my schedule to make room for ME Time? Write down 3 things you can delete or delegate from your schedule.

* What resources (time, money, people, tools) do I have that could help me practice Intensive Self-Care?

* What support can I get from my family, friends, coworkers, or other help professionals?

* Write yourself an *Intensive Self-Care Permission Slip*
-- Just as we write permission slips to allow our children to go on a field trip or participate in activities, you can write yourself a permission slip to practice Intensive Self-Care. Below is a sample Intensive Self-Care Permission Slip. Make as many copies as you like. Post it somewhere you can see daily as a visual reminder to take good care of YOU.

Intensive Self-Care Permission Slip

I hereby give _____
(fill in your name)

my permission to _____

(fill in whatever self-care activity you choose,
including the date or how often you would like
to do it)

Your Name:

Your Signature:

Date:





About the Author



Hueina Su, MS, BSN, CEC is an internationally recognized expert in helping people find the missing peace in their stressful lives. What sets her apart from other stress management experts is the 5,000 years of ancient Chinese wisdom and culture behind her. Brought up in Taiwan and trained in the U.S., she is known for her wisdom, compassion, and the way she graciously applies her unique blend of Eastern philosophy and western training in solving modern day problems.

Hueina is a keynote speaker, certified professional coach, author, creator of ***Rx For Balance™*** coaching program, and the founder & CEO of Beyond Horizon Coaching, a global coaching and training company specializing in providing solutions for stress management, life balance and Intensive Self-Care.

Hueina started her first career as a registered nurse and has more than 20 years of experience in nursing, coaching, counseling, speaking, training, nonprofit management, and small business. Prior to becoming a certified professional coach, she has worked in healthcare, academia, nonprofit, private sector, small business and freelance. Since she has thrived in so many professions and lived in many places, Hueina is extremely adaptable to change and great at reinventing herself. She has lived and traveled extensively in Asia and U.S., which enhances her natural ability to understand, connect and work with people from different backgrounds. Her unique blend of philosophy, training and life experiences are invaluable assets in her coaching ability, and create extraordinary results for her clients.

Brought up in a family with four generations of doctors and nurses, and having been a nurse herself, she knows first-hand the stressful lives they lead. With her extensive personal and professional experiences as a

Nurturer, Hueina understands deeply the challenges that women nurturers face every day. She had experienced and overcome Nurturing Burnout herself as a registered nurse caring for terminal cancer patients, and again as a full-time counselor, commuting 3 hours a day, while caring for her newborn baby. She has since successfully made the transitions from full-time working mother to stay-at-home mom, and now as a professional speaker, author and life coach doing the work she loves. It is her passion and personal mission to empower other Nurturers to practice Intensive Self-Care, create balance and joy, and live the life they truly desire. By changing the lives of female Nurturers, she intends to empower these women as role models for the next generation of women, and impact the lives they will touch for generations to come.

Hueina lives with C. Carey Yang, her husband of 15 years and their two beautiful children in New Jersey, U.S.A. In her spare time, she enjoys photography, reading, writing, music, martial arts training, fencing, yoga, movies, travel, hanging out with friends and family, volunteering at her children's schools and charity. She holds a Black Belt in Tae Kwon Do, has competed and won multiple gold medals in Tae Kwon Do, Kung Fu and Tai Chi Sword, in NJ state and regional tournaments. One of her personal goals is to become a grandma with lots of inspiring and adventurous stories to tell. She is working on that every day.



Additional Resources

www.RxForBalance.com -- Sign up for a **FREE Intensive Self-Care Kit** and get information about ***Rx for Balance***[™] coaching & training program, keynotes, Teleclass and other resources.

www.HueinaSu.com -- The official website of Hueina Su with her keynote speaking & coaching information, videos as well as her blog. Get insider scoop on her upcoming book ***Invisible Chaos***.

www.CoachingOasis.com -- Get on an one-year self-discovery life makeover journey with Hueina Su as your personal mentor, as she guides you toward greater success, happiness, confidence and fulfillment in every area of your life.

www.TrueHealingOils.com -- Therapeutic-grade essential oils for optimal stress relief, physical and emotional healing. These essential oils are amazing tools for Intensive Self-Care and personal transformation. Check out the great educational information on holistic health for you and your family.



Other Products from Hueina Su

Intensive Care for the Nurturer's Soul – Book & CDs



Intensive Care for the Nurturer's Soul – 7 Keys to Nurture Yourself While Caring for Others

A Must-Read interactive guidebook for caregivers, parents, healthcare professionals and all nurturers.

Book - \$19.99

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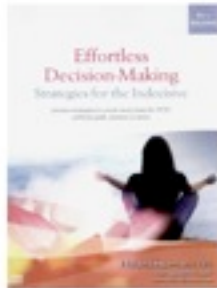


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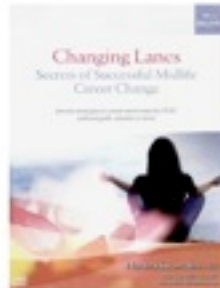


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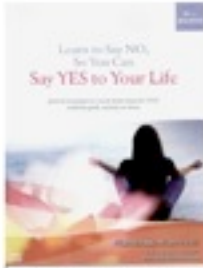


Changing Lanes Secrets of Successful Multiple Career Change

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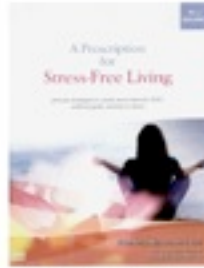
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