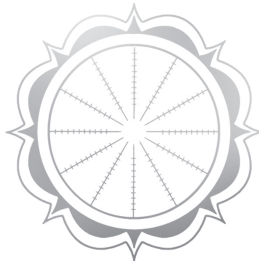


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THE FINANCIAL MINDSET FIX



A Mental Fitness Program
for an Abundant Life

CONTENTS

Exercises are available for download at financialmindsetfix.com/exercises

Introduction	Wake Up! You Deserve a Greater Life	1
	The Financial Health Wheel	14
Chapter 1	Abundance: Discover Your Worth and See That We're All Beggars Sitting on a Golden Bench	19
	Therapy Session Number 1	21
	Look at Your Financial Self in the Mirror	25
	Examine Your Self-Worth	27
	Synergize for Success	30
	Record and Rewire Your Thinking	31
	The Abundance Wheel	35
Chapter 2	Awareness: Realize How Your Unconscious Is Robbing You of Riches	39
	Therapy Session Number 2	41
	Identify Your Default Role	44
	Drop Your Defenses	50
	Check Up on Your Mental Health	57
	Check Your Reality by Budgeting	59
	The Awareness Wheel	62
Chapter 3	Responsibility: Stop the Blame Game and Take the Reins of Your Life	67
	Therapy Session Number 3	69
	Author Your Best Future	72
	Take an Honest Look at Yourself	78
	Take Fiscal Responsibility	80
	The Responsibility Wheel	81
Chapter 4	Presence: Promote Fiscal Consciousness Through Being a Human Being, Not a Human Doing	85
	Therapy Session Number 4	88
	Pump the Breaks on Busyness	92
	Redirect Your Attention to the Here and Now	97
	Try a Financial Fast	99
	Spend Mindfully	100
	The Presence Wheel	101

Chapter 5	Essence: See How Your Ego Is Killing Your Cash Karma	105
	Therapy Session Number 5	107
	Align with Your Essence	110
	Cancel Your Ego Trip	118
	The Essence Wheel	122
Chapter 6	Self-Love: Tell Your Inner Saboteur to Buzz Off and Invest in Yourself with Fierce Love	127
	Therapy Session Number 6	129
	Face Your Inner Saboteur	132
	Cultivate Your Inner Dream Team	137
	The Self-Love Wheel	139
Chapter 7	Vision: Whip Out Your Magic Wand to Create a Luxurious Life and Better World	145
	Therapy Session Number 7	148
	Declare a Personal Manifesto	151
	Dream Big Dreams	152
	Develop an Action Plan	156
	Live with Intention	157
	Visualize Success	158
	The Vision Wheel	159
Chapter 8	Support: Appreciate That Giving and Receiving Are Two Sides of the Same Coin	163
	Therapy Session Number 8	165
	Replenish Yourself	167
	Remove Barriers to Receiving Support	170
	The Support Network Wheel	176
	The Support Wheel	183
Chapter 9	Compassion: Explore the Spirituality of Business and Recognize That Love Is the Currency of Life	187
	Therapy Session Number 9	188
	Increase Success Through Empathy	192
	Expand with Compassion	196
	Wield the Power of Lovingkindness	198
	Pay It Forward	201
	The Compassion Wheel	202

Chapter 10	Detachment: Disempower Fear, Negativity, and Financial Anxiety to Welcome Prosperity	207
	Therapy Session Number 10	209
	Shelve Your Worries with "The Container"	213
	Recalibrate Expectations to Zero	214
	Separate from Negativity	217
	Practice Detachment with Love	219
	The Detachment Wheel	220
Chapter 11	Positivity: Harness the Power of Extreme Optimism to Manifest Success	225
	Therapy Session Number 11	226
	Reframe Positively to Become Grateful	229
	Act "As If"	231
	Look for the Exceptions	233
	Do Some Exposure Therapy	235
	The Work Satisfaction Wheel	240
	The Positivity Wheel	244
Chapter 12	Resilience: Convert Adversity into Opulent Opportunity	249
	Therapy Session Number 12	251
	Flagging the Minefield	257
	Create a Financial Resilience Plan	261
	Focus on Growth	264
	Practice Affirmations for Resilience	266
	The Resilience Wheel	267
Conclusion	Financial Mindset Wisdom: Bringing It All Together for Complete Prosperity	271
	The Mindset Fix Wheel	272
	The Financial Health Wheel	276
Acknowledgments		281
Notes		285
Book Club Reader's Guide		303
About the Author		305

Introduction

WAKE UP! YOU DESERVE A GREATER LIFE

What you seek is seeking you.

RUMI thirteenth-century poet, Sufi mystic, and theologian

When I began graduate school at Northwestern University, I was afraid my professors would notice my struggle with anxiety and, as a result, tell me that I wasn't fit to become a therapist, which was my dream. As I read textbooks and listened to lectures about mental health, addiction, and relational problems, I recognized aspects of myself and my family. I sat in silent shame, thinking I was expected to have it all together.

Thankfully, the faculty recognized that as part of the human condition, we *all* have mental health issues and encouraged the students to participate in personal counseling. Just as we don't expect doctors or nurses to have perfect physical health, we don't expect therapists to have perfect mental health. (Phew!) We are expected, however, to take care of our mental health as best as possible, serving as healthy models and guides for others.

It was the process of my own therapy, combined with my clinical training, that opened my eyes. It gave me the language and lens to understand myself, my relationships, life, and the world around me. I learned to relax into the understanding that my anxiety was a normal response to my nature and nurture and began to practice self-compassion. I learned the tools to better manage my stress and anxiety and expanded my comfort zone so I could blossom into my best self. Of course, I'm still a work in progress, as none of us is perfect, but I'm living a more abundant life than I ever imagined. I want the same for you too!

Do you want a prosperous life filled with inner peace, support, and financial success? If so, what is keeping you from achieving a life you deserve?

We all unconsciously recreate what is familiar until we become aware of and choose something better. It took years of struggle before I chose to emancipate myself from self-limitation. To save you time and suffering, I'll share with you what I learned from more than twenty years of counseling clients, starting and selling a business, and working on myself to create transformative change resulting in greater personal and financial prosperity.

A Surprise Bonus

After several years of working in a variety of settings with a diverse array of clients, I noticed my clients were receiving unexpected bonuses due to their efforts in therapy. As they were making progress in therapy, they were receiving raises, promotions, starting successful businesses, and doing better financially.

Why was this happening?

In therapy, no matter what issues we are working on, we are always simultaneously treating underlying feelings of self-worth, or the value we place on ourselves. As my clients' sense of worth improved, so did their finances—because of increased confidence, empowerment, assertiveness, and self-care.

Renowned author Suze Orman noticed this same correlation through her work as a financial advisor and said, “Lasting net worth comes only when you have a healthy and strong sense of self-worth.”¹ However, Orman cautions that it doesn't work the other way; having high net worth doesn't increase the likelihood that you will have high self-worth. Scientists have observed a similar pattern in research literature; mental health significantly predicts future wealth, yet wealth does not affect future mental health.² I've noticed these same trends in my practice and began sharing this knowledge through executive coaching, business consulting, corporate training, and public speaking. While financial advisors help people manage their money, as a psychotherapist, I help professionals utilize psychological skills to improve their self-worth and emotional intelligence in order to achieve work-life balance and financial success.

Curiously enough, the basics of money management is not rocket science—set a budget, make more than you spend, have a savings account, pay off your debt, and plan for the future. It's our psychology that can make our financial

lives difficult. Popular radio host and author Dave Ramsey believes that financial success is 20 percent financial knowledge and 80 percent behavior.³ He confirms that financial success is all about your ability to control the person in the mirror. As you continue to go through this program, you'll begin to see how your thoughts, feelings, attitudes, self-care, goals, motivation, and support impact your finances directly. Self-love is a big factor in your financial success.

Early on in my career, with only \$500 to invest and \$50,000 of student loans, I started my counseling business, Urban Balance, when my first daughter was two years old. As the practice grew, the business went through difficult financial times. I put a lien on my home, fully anticipating filing for bankruptcy. Through countless mistakes, which you'll learn more about in the chapters to come, I learned some painful but valuable lessons, including the harmful aspects of the ego, the importance of accessing support, and more. After a lot of work on myself and my relationship with money, and with the help of many talented people, we turned the ship around. Thirteen years after start-up, I successfully sold Urban Balance for several million dollars and was able to invest in the parent company, Refresh Mental Health, for continued growth in earnings.

Under the new ownership, Urban Balance continues to thrive beyond my wildest dreams. The company provides jobs for hundreds of people in several states, mental health services for tens of thousands of people per year, internships for countless therapists-in-training, and even sliding fee and pro bono counseling services for people in need.

Shift Your Financial Mindset to a Holistic View of Success

It has been an enormous blessing to learn about mental health and the psychology of money from my clients' experiences as well as my own. Through this, I've recognized universal truths and identified twelve mindsets that improve mental health, relationships, and financial prosperity when put into action.

For the past ten years, I have been sharing these insights through national speaking engagements. The response has been overwhelmingly positive, with attendees saying the content is inspiring, empowering, and even life changing. They discovered that in order to live a truly abundant life, it's essential to have both positive mental health and financial health, not one without the other. Now, you can adopt this holistic mindset and create a life of wellness and abundance by working through this engaging program from the comfort of your own home.

We are in the midst of a mental health epidemic, and we have been for quite some time. In the late 1990s, substance abuse and mental health issues were on the rise in the United States due to the opioid epidemic. In late 2007, people began experiencing immense financial stress from the Great Recession, further exacerbating the mental health epidemic. On top of these significant historical stressors, many of us were suffering from the disease of being busy. Through technology, we were plugged into a never-ending stream of news and work. We became disconnected from ourselves and one another. Our achievement-oriented and consumer-based culture taught us that money equates to happiness. This led many of us to operate from ego and become competitive, negatively impacting our ability to foster deep interpersonal connection and collaboration at home and work.

The result is an alarming and deeply concerning rise in mental illness and addiction, which is costly to each of us on a personal, community, and global level:

- Seventy-three percent of Americans experience psychological symptoms caused by stress, and 48 percent feel their stress has increased over the past five years.⁴
- In 2018, approximately 20.3 million people in the US had a substance use disorder, including 14.8 million people who had an alcohol use disorder and 8.1 million people who had an illicit drug use disorder.⁵
- According to the National Alliance on Mental Illness, one out of five Americans (nearly 44 million people) experience mental illness in a given year, and 46.4 percent will experience a mental illness during their lifetime.⁶
- Suicide completion rates have surged to a thirty-year high. Globally, over 800,000 suicides are reported each year with more unreported.⁷ Suicide is the tenth leading cause of death in the US.⁸
- Less than half of US adults with mental illness received treatment in 2018, and the median delay between the onset of mental illness symptoms and treatment is eleven years.⁹

And then a worldwide pandemic started in 2020. As a society already experiencing a mental health epidemic, the pandemic was quick to ignite a global mental health and financial crisis. The plummeting economy and

surging unemployment caused prolonged financial stress, panic, and fear. Mandatory lockdowns and social-distancing requirements caused people to feel isolated and lose important social support, such as in-person connection to friends and family. Normal routines like attending school or work, visiting a place of worship, working out at the gym, going shopping, and visiting friends were gone in an instant. Many people began referring to the mental health crisis as the “epidemic within the pandemic.”

At the time of this writing, the following information was current. Keep in mind these figures will most likely continue to change:

- Research suggests that “deaths of despair”—deaths arising from alcohol, drugs, or suicide—could jump by up to 154,037 in the US due to the pandemic.¹⁰ As of June 2020, one in four Americans between the ages of eighteen and twenty-four had serious thoughts about committing suicide.¹¹
- Anxiety and depression have surged during the pandemic. In Turkey, for example, 23.6 percent of people experienced depression; 45.1 percent of people experienced anxiety.¹²
- The pandemic has greatly increased post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) in certain hotspots around the globe. In a Tunisian community, for example, 33 percent of the general population experienced PTSD. Time spent watching news about the pandemic or being exposed to details of a person’s illness, death, or burial due to COVID-19 were positively associated with PTSD.¹³
- Obsessive compulsive disorder (OCD) rates have risen during the pandemic. A population in Italy, for example, showed a substantial increase in the severity of OCD symptoms during the first six weeks of their lockdown.¹⁴
- Intimate partner violence has surged worldwide due to increases in joblessness, economic anxiety, and physical isolation in homes during the pandemic. The United Nations Population Fund estimates that fifteen million additional cases of gender-based violence will occur worldwide for every three months of lockdown.¹⁵

We are learning an important lesson from the pandemic—there is an intrinsic relationship between mental health and financial health. Not caring for your mental health could cost you relationships, employment, or even your life. Financial distress accounts for 16 percent of suicides in the US and correlates with lower life satisfaction and higher stress, anxiety, and depression.¹⁶

We need to include positive mental and physical health, relationships, and work-life balance in our definition of success, not simply financial achievement. It's time to shed the shame and stop the blame by honoring how both world events and your unique life experiences have impacted you emotionally and financially. Good for you for deciding to work through a program that will empower you with the tools to persevere through challenges with courageous resilience and create sustainable success.

It's Not About the Money, It's About Financial Health and Well-Being

In this book, I encourage you to improve your financial health for your own good as well as for the good of others. I'm not encouraging greed, excess material possessions, waste, or the love of money. When we compassionately (by doing no harm) acquire and manage money, it can enable generosity, altruism, and positive change for the greater good. We are talking about using financial prosperity to care for ourselves, each other, and the world around us. Love is the true currency of life.

Being an active participant in life and aligning our unique gifts with a need in the world can improve our financial mindset. When we make our greatest effort to contribute with our fullest self-expression, we can both weather financial storms and reap tremendous monetary rewards.

About The Financial Mindset Fix Program

The Financial Mindset Fix is a holistic program to enhance your mindset around finances and transform the way you think, feel, and act so you can get out of your own way and achieve the success you deserve. Each chapter focuses on a different mindset that, when adopted, can improve your well-being and financial health, with empirical support to back that up. The program includes exercises and practical tools to set you up for success. The following is an

overview of each chapter's mindset and how embracing this way of living will increase both your mental and financial fitness:

CHAPTER 1: ABUNDANCE

Explore your psychology of money, embrace your worth, and expand your thinking to welcome abundance into your life. Shift your perspective from scarcity to abundance. By doing so, you'll be able to recognize and unlock the doors to a more expansive, supported, and prosperous life.

CHAPTER 2: AWARENESS

Remove the blinders of defense and denial and recognize how your mental health impacts your financial health. Wake up and notice you are unconsciously repeating what is familiar and choose a more prosperous path.

CHAPTER 3: RESPONSIBILITY

Now that you are aware of the emotions and behaviors that constrain you, free yourself of resentment and anger through responsibility and forgiveness. Empower yourself to become the author of the rest of your life story. Take control of your financial future.

CHAPTER 4: PRESENCE

Further increase your awareness by giving yourself the present of presence. Experience the riches only available in the here and now. Apply mindfulness to your financial life to make decisions from a place of peace, groundedness, and clarity.

CHAPTER 5: ESSENCE

Through presence, connect with your inner light and highest self. Become aware of how your ego is hindering your contentment and prosperity. Understand how healthy self-esteem is halfway between Diva and Doormat. Align your life and work with your core values to launch yourself to tremendous heights of personal and professional success.

CHAPTER 6: SELF-LOVE

Now that you are connected with your essence, know you are innately good and deserving of prosperity. Become your own good parent, positive coach, and

compassionate advocate by not sabotaging yourself. Invest in yourself through fierce love and financial self-care, so you have more to give yourself and others.

CHAPTER 7: VISION

Your outer life is a direct reflection of self-love. Develop a personal manifesto that aligns with your soul's mission. Recreate your life in new and magical ways by envisioning what you would do if you had a magic wand. For sustainable success, create work-life balance and look for the universal win-win.

CHAPTER 8: SUPPORT

To make your vision a reality, nurture and utilize your support network. Break through barriers like guilt, shame, and fear and open yourself up to receiving support. Weed out toxic relationships and welcome people into your life who raise your stock so you can do more good in the world.

CHAPTER 9: COMPASSION

Strengthen your support, loyalty, and true prosperity by having a heart of gold that expresses empathy, care, and kindness. Appreciate how opening your mind, encouraging others, and paying it forward with generosity will help you reap great rewards.

CHAPTER 10: DETACHMENT

Keep your eye on the prize and maintain a positive vibe by detaching from drama and negativity. Unplug from FUD—fear, uncertainty, and doubt—so you can weather the storms and stay on course for your personal and financial vision.

CHAPTER 11: POSITIVITY

Now that your heart is in the right place, you are unstoppable! Put yourself out in the world with cheerful enthusiasm and extreme optimism. Spin straw into gold by practicing gratitude to align with greater prosperity. Use creativity and proactive behaviors to negotiate a better life.

CHAPTER 12: RESILIENCE

Discover why progress isn't linear and adversity is the birthplace of opportunity. Develop resilience to help you move through difficulties so you can

come out stronger, more flexible, and more adaptable on the other end. Learn how to combine everything you've learned in this program to thrive, prosper, and persevere!

CONCLUSION: FINANCIAL MINDSET WISDOM

Bring all your learned skills together for complete prosperity and to improve your well-being and financial health.

Who Benefits from This Program?

The Financial Mindset Fix program is geared toward:

- People who desire an improved financial life, including those living paycheck to paycheck and those who want to increase their prosperity.
- Those who want to improve their mental health and happiness.
- Business leaders and professionals who desire new tools to improve their emotional intelligence, relationship skills, and leadership abilities.
- Entrepreneurs, business owners, and self-employed workers who want to improve their work-life balance and their bottom line.
- Business consultants and advisors who want to help their clients succeed.
- Corporate teams who want to improve communication and collaboration and increase sales.
- Companies that want to offer health and wellness programming to reduce stress at work, absenteeism, and health-care costs while increasing employee productivity and retention.
- Athletes and creative professionals who want to improve their professional performance and success.
- Caretaking professionals who want to prevent burnout and desire greater financial prosperity.
- Therapists and coaches who can use the material and exercises for themselves and their clients.
- School social workers, school counselors, and educators who can use this material to develop life skills and psychosocial programming for students.

We all need therapy or counseling at different points in our lives. If you have never had therapy or aren't currently in counseling, it might be helpful as you work the program. If you are in therapy, this program serves as a powerful supplement. However, if you aren't interested in therapy at this time, this program is like a vitamin to boost your mental health immune system. This book is not intended as a substitute for professional mental health treatment. The Financial Mindset Fix is a mental fitness program that also leads to financial gain.

What You Need to Know About Each Chapter

Each chapter focuses on one of the twelve different mindsets and explains how adopting it can improve your mental and financial health. Each chapter begins with a personal story of how the mindset helped me move through some tough situations. I'm hoping that sharing my story gets your wheels turning on how that mindset can help you too. I also share inspirational stories from my clients' experiences. To ensure confidentiality, all of the anecdotes in this book are composites of different clients with the identifying variables changed. These stories will help you discover that you are not alone in your challenges or your quest to optimize your financial mindset!

To help you best apply each principle, I dispersed short exercises throughout the chapters so you can begin to apply them to your life and work. Many of these exercises are popular tools therapists use in their practices. They come from various empirically supported therapeutic approaches, including cognitive behavioral therapy (CBT), self-psychology, narrative therapy, and others. Some of my favorite exercises are the Therapy Sessions, which allow you to imagine that you're stepping into my office for a therapy or business coaching session. I'll ask you specific questions to promote self-reflection and insight. Of course, this isn't actual psychotherapy, but you will gain significant insight into yourself and how you might need to change to improve your mental and financial health. As you go through the exercises, take your time. There's no need to rush through them.

Highly innovative (and revealing) wheel exercises review the mindsets in each chapter, assess and measure where you are at, and help you gain traction on the road to prosperity. In my speaking engagements and workshops, these wheel exercises are sometimes initially met with some resistance. However,