

Five Steps to Get Focused On Living



Creating a Life After the Kids Have Flown the Coop

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Welcome to Get Focused on Living!



I am so grateful that you have downloaded this free gift.

It's that day! The one where you wake up and realize, it's changed, it's really happened – and it will never be the same again!

Your kids are gone, you are at mid life - as is your spouse, and there is a part of your life that is just.... over.

Walking back into your home after seeing a child off to college, celebrating your son's marriage, or setting up an apartment in a far away city with your successful daughter, there is an almost haunting feeling that envelopes your being.

Where is the noise? Where is the busyness? Where are the endless grocery and laundry lists?

First, of course, there is a feeling of relief! (And maybe some jumping up and down about this!) But then, you think....

What do I do next?

Whether employed full time, part time, or having been a stay at home mom, once your children leave your nest, there suddenly is an empty space of activity, companionship and fulfillment that seems to surround you.

Trust that this period does not last forever. In fact, it is part of the process of moving forward into the next stages of your life.

You are older, you are wiser, and you have seen and accomplished so much! However, while tending to a growing family, you likely did not have a lot of time think about what this period of life would be like. You just kept going through the motions.

The Get Focused on Living community was created because I heard other women like you talking about how they were at a loss now that they were no longer 'needed' on a daily basis by their kids. They still did not know how stop the knee jerk reaction of taking care of others before themselves and they wanted to begin to create a life of purpose and fulfillment but weren't quite sure where to start.

This **5 Step Guide to Get Focused on Living** was created to affirm to you that your feelings are a normal part of the progression into the next stage of life – which can be the most incredible and fun stage of life! You are older, wiser, and more confident than you were when you started your family. There is no reason why you cannot create a full life for yourself again. After all, you did it before!

The **5 Step Guide to Get Focused on Living** will equip you with action steps to take you through the first stages of understanding where you've been, where you are now, and to discover the amazing person still waiting to develop inside of you!

You are not only a mom! You are a shining star in this universe with talent, skill and ability to share! It's ***your*** time to grow and learn!



Let's get started!



To Get Focused on Living requires a quieting of your mind, introspection and writing down of thoughts so as to understand better the person you are today. This will help you understand where you want to be going and how to focus on getting there.

Paper and pen is all you need to get started, but if you choose to, writing in a nice notebook or journal will provide you with a permanent place to come back to when you need the reassurance that you are truly moving forward. This journal is yours. It does not need to be shared with anyone.

If you've never done this before, you will be surprised at how important and sacred your journal will become for you. It becomes the cornerstone of this new chapter of your life!

The five 'R's" to Get Focused on Living are:

- Reflection
- Reassurance
- Realization
- Recognition
- Resolution

By following the actions suggested in each step, you will have the opportunity to acknowledge and honor each part of your life. You will begin to recognize in yourself the activities, work and talents that bring you happiness and make your life feel good. Then you can begin to develop a plan of action for what you will be doing next.

Step 1 ~ Reflection

There are a series of natural reactions that every parent experiences as their children grow into adulthood and take off on their own. This is a time of change and chapter closing. It is a time of reflection.

First, there is sadness over what will be no more. Your job of 'raising' children is completed. Those days of changing babies, chasing toddlers, helping with homework and car-pooling teens to sport events and late into the night are done. Over.

(I can hear the Amen's and Yeah's!)

But even if you applaud the relief of not having to do these things, there is also typically some sadness over the closing of this chapter of your life.

Allow yourself time (but not years!) to reflect on the life you have had, grieve what will be no more, and applaud the wonderful job you have done in raising a family and managing a household for 20+ years.

No matter how chaotic, disjointed or crazy your life has been, it is still your life and it should be honored.

Truly recognize what you have accomplished. It is no small feat. Your daily life has been a vocation of love, devotion, laughter and a lot, **really a lot**, of *hard, hard work*.

Recognize it, embrace it, and accept it lovingly into your heart.

You did good.

Journal Time for Reflection:

- *Write 5 thoughts about what was great about raising your children.*
- *Write 5 things you will miss about having them home.*
- *Write 5 feelings you have for having raised this family.*

Step 2 ~ Reassurance

As you begin to let go, you start to experience a feeling of reassurance as your child takes off on his or her own. You're still on the 'sidelines' or the 'bleachers' as you watch them begin to make decisions about their career path, people to associate with and making good choices.

And even when they don't make the best choices, most times it is a lesson well learned, no one gets hurt, and you are reassured that in the long run they will be fine. (Think back to when you were in your 20's. You likely learned lots of lessons learned the hard way... and those lessons *have* to be lived through in order to successfully grow into adulthood! We cannot do it for our kids.)

You have done your job. You have born, raised and released an adult into the world! He or she is another human being who will make an impression or difference in humanity. **That is the purpose to having children.**

While your creation is still a developing project – your every day involvement in making choices for them is over. Your physical presence on the sidelines and the bleachers is now replaced more often with text, SKYPE and Facetime conversations. And occasional visits or meals out (they love those meals!) They still need you but not in the same way as before.

Have confidence and be reassured in their ability to do what they need to do to have a happy and successful life – after all, they've learned from you!



Journal Time for Reassurance:

- Write the names of each of your kids at the top of each page.
- Write the 3 things you love most about each of them under their names.
- Write a paragraph to each of them about how they have brought joy to your life.

(At some point in this journey, you may choose to share this with them.)

Step 3 ~ Realization

Once you acknowledge the passage of the child rearing stage of life, reflect on what it meant to you, and then go on to accept and be assured that your children will be fine, you are left with the realization that there is a heck of a lot of life left to live.

You've likely had a very full life of your own in some sort of fashion through these years, but now you become aware that you now have more hours in each week than you have had in a *very long time* to focus on things non-kid-centric. It doesn't mean you aren't concerned about your children or don't want to find time to spend with them, but **daily living** returns to a focus on your schedule and your needs.

This can be a bit daunting for those who poured so much into keeping their kids, spouse and household on a routine and schedule revolving around their needs and not necessarily yours.

But this is where you begin to move forward – and it is an exciting part of this journey!

First thing you need to make a priority is to find quiet time for you each day.

Whether in prayer or meditation, create the space for you to relax and clear your mind in a way that it has likely not been able to be in many years. Start with just 5 minutes if that is all you have; working up to 20 to 30 minutes is ideal. It can include inspiring or spiritual reading or music. The point is to take your mind off of the daily stuff and place it where it can 'listen'.

After a few moments of quiet reflection, use your journal or notebook to write down the thoughts that come to mind. Not your to do list and the grocery list. Begin to become conscientious of the things that you've wanted to do, pursue, look into, discover; those things that were pushed to the back of your mind because of all the activity going on around you.

Journal Time for Realization:

- *Write the things you always wanted to try.*
- *Write places you would like to travel to.*
- *Write down things that you do or did that bring you joy.*

Step 4 ~ Recognition

For some, at this stage, the lists written in the Realization stage begin to bring more angst than the reality of the kids being gone.

"Oh my," you say. "Look at what I have not done yet and how will I do it all now? I've got too much I want to learn, see and do! I don't have enough time, money and energy."

Don't get stuck here.

Too many women become immobile at this stage and do nothing different to create a life that will bring them joy and fulfillment. They stay stuck in their same old routine. They may take a class or go to a bible study or take one trip or try a new work out class. Soon, however, they find themselves returning to their nest and falling back into the same routine.

First, honor and respect where you stand right now. Understand that this is a process and will take time. **But it shouldn't take so much time that you will never move forward** to enjoy doing things you really want to do, become more fit and healthier, or offer your talents and abilities to another business or organization that can use your skills.

Embrace what you do like about where you are. Celebrate all the good that is in your life right now.



Journal Time for Recognition:

- *Write what you like about where you live.*
- *Write what you like about the work you do.*
- *List the people that bring a smile to your face.*

Step 5 ~ Resolution

The final step is where you resolve to take control and responsibility for your life. This doesn't mean that you are dismissing everything that has been important to you in order to 'fulfill your passion' or 'follow your dream' or to lose weight or get more organized.

It means you create a plan where all aspects of your life flow together on a daily, weekly, monthly and longer term basis.

You've reflected on what you have done, reassured yourself that all is well with your children, realize that you are really okay and can move on to make your dreams a reality, and recognize that you are starting from where you are right now. Today. Here. Now.

You now take these elements of your family, your talents, your dreams, and your starting place and look forward to the future.

We all have daily tasks and responsibilities to ourselves, our spouses, our family and friends and work places. These will always be on your calendar.

There are at least 16 waking hours in each day. When your kids were home, you filled those 16 hours with a LOT of activity, running around, cooking, cleaning, etc.

Now many of those hours spent doing those things can be filled with doing the things that are important to you.

Journal Time for Resolution

- Read your journal postings from the previous sessions
- List the top three things that pop out at you about what brings you joy or a sense of purpose and accomplishment from all of your lists (you should find a common theme or some sentences repeated throughout your writings)
- Write down:
 - One thing you can do today that you've not done in a while or that will help you to feel accomplished
 - A fun, different activity you can schedule for the next week
 - Your idea for a trip, a new hobby or activity, or personal goal to plan and schedule into the next 6 months of your life.

This step may not be completed in one sitting. Read and re-read your journal. Take the time to absorb, reflect and process the words you have written.

When something makes your heart flutter or bring a smile to your face – think about the possibility of what it would mean if you could make that ‘thing’ happen.

Nothing is impossible to do or accomplish. You only need to have a plan to get to there from where you are today!

Use your journal, discuss with your spouse and friends, research into what you will need to do to start a business, lose the weight, travel to new places, write a book, become part of a charitable organization.... Whatever it is that will bring good to others and joy to your life!

Your children will go on to live their lives! Be the example to them of how full and complete a life can be! Enjoy the journey!



Next Steps



Congratulations! You have started your journey to a better understanding of you and a life that can be filled with purpose, passion and joy!

Growth and finding your purpose doesn't happen with one guide or a few sentences in a journal, it is an ongoing voyage, one that doesn't have to be traveled alone.

Please join our community by connecting in one of the following ways!

Other ways to connect with the Get Focused on Living Community:

Blog & Webpage: www.getfocusedonliving.com

Facebook: www.facebook.com/dianesweeneybiz

Twitter: www.twitter.com/dianemsweeney

Instagram: www.instagram.com/dianemsweeney

Email: diane@getfocusedonliving.com

In the Fall of 2015, my book "*Finding your Place (and Purpose) After the Kids are Gone*" will be available through my website. Watch for announcements!

Workshops and coaching groups are being formed for health and professional development! [Contact me here](#) and tell me where you need support.

Who Am I?



Hi, I'm Diane Sweeney, happy wife, mom, daughter, sister, cousin, aunt and friend. (Relationships come first!)

Copywriter, health and wellness consultant, human resources and market research professional are some of the titles I have worn, but in my heart I am foremost an advocate of living a healthy, fulfilled life, especially as I enter into the next phase of life – after 50 and with an empty nest! I write about it, live it and share it with those who also have the same wish for their life.

I understand how the chaotic years of child raising, career building, home establishing and relationship tending can keep one so busy and focused on the needs of all those around you, that you can lose sight of whomever you are. When everything quiets down you are sitting there saying, "Who am I? Who was I? And now what happens next?"

Focusing.... that's been a problem for me. I want to do it all and all at once, and bigger and better than everyone else. So I started all the phases of getting something done, on several projects, got overwhelmed, and usually got nothing done. I've spent many years working on how to stay focused and on track to goals I have set. It's not always been easy and certainly I've not conquered it, but I have gotten much better.

So, as I began to develop a plan of what I wanted to do next in life, I recognized that I was not alone and that others could benefit from what I have learned through this process. It all began to pull together so I decided to name my platform of interaction the two things that are so important for people – to FOCUS and to LIVE life to it's fullest.

I offer to you this free guide as a starting point to your journey. Take the time to use the tools provided to understand who you are, where you've been and where you want to go.

Life is far from over, so let's live it with focus and purpose!