

Sue Hawkes

Quick Start Guide

To Becoming

Unf♥<kwithable

Without

Burning Out



Quick Start Guide to Becoming Unf♥<kwithable Without Burning Out

Becoming an unf♥<kwithable leader means *to be truly at peace and in touch with yourself, and nothing anyone says or does bothers you, and no negativity or drama can touch you.*

It also means you need to juggle multiple responsibilities at the same time. You may have to fold laundry at your son's soccer game or spend time with your daughter at the office. Your work and life become one instead of competing for your attention. For even the most influential leaders — burnout is difficult to avoid.

I've talked to a lot of unf♥<kwithable leaders and they often appear to be superheroes. They are mothers and grandmothers who are running businesses, speaking at events, making a difference and generally kicking ass from the outside looking in. Throughout my conversations with these leaders, I've spotted several common ingredients in their recipe for success. I've applied them in my own life to focus my energy.

So, without further ado, here is my quick-start guide to becoming unf♥<kwithable without burning yourself out.





Self-Care

We like to believe we have a bottomless bucket to contribute from, and I've been caught in that illusion myself. An abundance mindset will tell you there's more than enough money, resources, and time. The truth is, those things aren't accessible unless you're taking care of *you*. Would you prefer to give 50% all of the time or 100% most of the time?

Many of you will remember my conversations with Pam Borton, founder of Team Women MN and Pam Borton Partners; and Carlene Wilson, CEO of Atmosphere Interiors. During these conversations, we unearthed a simple truth: Your top priority should always be *you*. Unf♥<kwithable leaders dedicate time to themselves every day. Even if it is well before anyone is awake, it is yours to find space and a sense of connection.

As you may already know, there's a reason you put on your oxygen mask first. If you are continually placing the needs of others before your own, burnout is inevitable. That is why you must be proactive. I've compiled some great self-care practices many of our unf♥<kwithable leaders follow:

Mental State

The most potent tool to sharpen the mind, enhance your mental state, and decrease stress is **mindfulness**. Mindfulness is exactly that — being mindful. It's focusing your attention on the present. In other words, you learn to impartially self-observe. This means observing and being present without judgment. People can reduce this to simplicity, however, it's one of the most important muscles to build to become unf♥<kwithable.

You can apply this to every interaction, whether you're eating, calling a client or meeting with your leadership team (put your phone away!). Being present and observing without judgment requires your full attention, and busy people don't often make time to be fully present this way.

Unf♥<kwithable leaders often practice **meditation** to learn how to be in the moment, and it's challenging. Ten minutes a day can work miracles for your mental health. Carlene Wilson wakes up every morning to drink coffee and reflect. Her quiet time is when she sets up her day for success. This is a practice most winning CEOs use. If you're not doing this, it's time to take a page from her playbook.

It's easy, and you can begin today. Try these simple steps to begin your daily practice:

- Find a quiet, secluded space.
- Sit in a comfortable position with a proper but relaxed posture.
- Close your eyes.
- Breathe big, deep, belly breaths while focusing your attention on the location where the air leaves



Self-Care

Mental State

As your mind wanders, catch your thoughts, stop and silently think to yourself “come back.” Feel your breathing and all the sensations you’re experiencing. Don’t beat yourself up if you need to repeat “come back” to yourself often. It’s a muscle you’ll build over time.

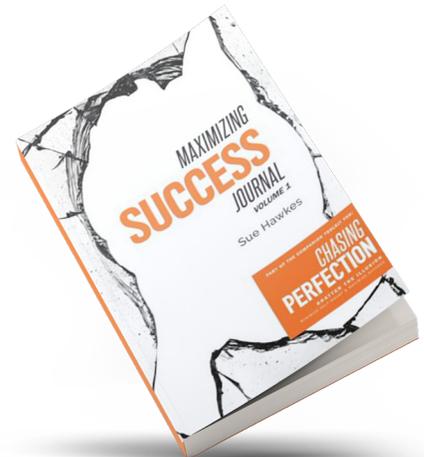
Another way to center your mind is by journaling. Journaling helps you find clarity, protect your confidence, and recognize patterns in your thinking. Even if you aren’t a natural writer, journaling for just three minutes a day is calming, useful and empowering. I have a journal specifically for people who haven’t journaled. It has one question a day and you can try it free for seven days.

Check out the “Maximizing Success Journal” here.

Another tip for creating mental clarity requires you to check your ego at the door, because if you’re struggling, you need to seek out help. Amy Zaroff (of Amy Zaroff Events and Design) and I talked at length about the importance of getting help with your mental health when you’re challenged with the stressors you face as a leader at work and home.

There’s no shame in seeing a therapist to help you regroup. It’s no different than taking your car in for maintenance when it’s not running well. As an unfathomable leader you learn to treat your mental health like your physical health.

Speaking of which...





Self-Care

Physical

Taking care of your body is as important as taking care of your mind, and exercise kills two birds with one stone. There are physical and mental benefits to routine fitness, so Amy Zaroff and I talked about different ways to make it more fun if you're not in the habit of it.

Dancing has never felt like a workout or challenge to me, so if you share my passion to move to music, Zumba classes are a lot of fun. Amy is the only other person I know who will dance anywhere at any time...so watch out!

Pilates reformer is another favorite exercise option of mine. It incorporates exercises designed to strengthen and heal muscles that are tense from stress. Amy recommends spin classes as a great way to get out of the house, meet other people, and burn off energy.

You've heard the adage, "If you enjoy what you do, you'll never work a day in your life." The same principle applies to exercise. Take some time to jot down the rewarding physical activities that caused you to break a sweat. If you live near a trailhead, go for a hike. If you love the feeling of kicking ass, take a kickboxing class. Whatever you do, get up and get moving. You can incorporate movement at work by holding standing or walking meetings as well, it doesn't have to be difficult to move more frequently.

My daughter Ali and I participate in the Whole Life Challenge, a six-week journey designed to renew every aspect of our daily lives. Throughout the course of the challenge, we practice what we preach. By consistently doing simple things like eating right, drinking more water, and getting enough sleep, we felt significantly different by the end of the challenge. It's a positive shock to the self-care system and a means to jumpstart your unf◊kwithable lifestyle.



Saying No

Self-care isn't always easy when you're tackling the million-and-one things it takes to be an unf♥<kwithable leader. There is one practice that's a necessity to avoid burnout while GSD (getting shit done) and that is learning to say no.

The word "no" is the most powerful tool in your arsenal for relinquishing control and overcoming limiting beliefs. Failure to use it frequently leads to the burnout we're working hard to avoid while creating a barrier between you and the world of unf♥<kwithability.

For Pam Borton, saying no means giving yourself permission to take time off and fill your bucket. Say no so you can have your evenings and weekends off to focus on your passions. Remember: you are just as important as your clients, your employees, your team, and your family. Every day, you need to make time for yourself.

Carlene Wilson explains that when you *say no*, you create time to do things that make you happy. It takes foresight and grit to know when something won't fit into your schedule; to pass on opportunities that interfere with your happiness.

Lisa David is a partner at eCapital Advisors, and for her, saying no requires self-forgiveness and should be guilt-free. You must be honest and vulnerable with clients, employees, family, and friends. Maintain transparency and be vocal if you can't make time for their requests when it doesn't work. Being authentic and vulnerable are hallmark traits of unf♥<kwithable leaders.

Marnie Ochs-Raleigh, CEO of Evolve Systems, describes *saying no* as a form of disconnecting. You can't be "always-on" without sacrificing time with family and friends. Her strategy is to totally unplug. She shuts off her computer, turns off her cell phone, and experiences being fully present with those around her.

For Amy Zaroff, saying no means overcoming "founder's syndrome" and finding the ability to separate her identity from her business. You are damn near perfect with or without it. Once you realize that, you will achieve a sense of peace and clarity unlike ever before.

Saying no means acknowledging that the world will keep turning if you step away from an opportunity or obligation. It requires discipline and mindfulness to step back and understand what you can and cannot add to your commitments at any given moment. Things don't always go according to plan. You also need a support system in place.



Support Systems

You're not alone in any of this. And being unfo<kwitable doesn't mean doing everything on your own. You need to find the courage to ask for help and rely upon others when it's in your best interest and this is true in every aspect of your life.

Work

Having a work family is something special. You leave the house excited about the people with whom you'll be collaborating. This relationship is invaluable, especially when you know your team will get the job done with you. Saying no is a lot easier when your team has your back and you have theirs.

Most leaders, including Pam Borton, all recommend the same thing: hire people who are smarter and more talented than you are. Nobody can do it all and you shouldn't have to. Wearing too many hats is a great way to burn out fast. Saying no is a measure to preserve your sanity. Surrounding yourself with intelligent, driven individuals contributing their unique talents broadens your capacity and expands your possibilities. WE can do what I can't.

According to Carlene Wilson, creating a collaborative culture is most effective when you establish shared values. Like trust, vulnerability, and reliability, shared values create a culture that encourages performance to go above and beyond.

Home

For many leaders, the support from your family knows no limits. Sometimes, it's your chosen family, not the one you were born into. These are the people you can lean on when the going gets tough. Authentic, loving relationships with your spouse, children, and friends makes it easier to ask for help. You can apologize when work gets in the way and make concrete plans without any external pressure.

Lisa David classifies family time as "untouchable." These sacred events aren't rescheduled for any reason. Your list of "untouchables" may be small, but it could include a morning huddle, a date night, or a family movie night.

Conclusion

If you've read my book, "Chasing Perfection: Shatter The Illusion; Minimize Self-Doubt & Maximize Success", you know I believe work-life balance is bullshit. When the most significant parts of your life are competing for your attention, you will never experience inner peace.

You can bring all facets of your life together and avoid burning out along the way using the practices I've included in this quick start guide. Remember to put on your oxygen mask first, practice self-care, learn to say no, and use your support systems when you need them. You will shatter illusions, maximize success, and become unfuckwithable as you do so!

