

G+S

"PRESENT"

EXPERIENCE GRACE & STRENGTH THROUGH
CHRIST-CENTRED YOGA & SOUL CARE PROGRAMS



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WELCOME

It's no coincidence that you are reading our '*PRESENT*' e-Book. We have been praying for those who find this *present* to be touched by the devotionals and yoga sessions we have prepared for you. We hope that you will be revealed the goodness of God's love as you *present* your heart, soul, mind and strength to receive His grace and strength on the mat. This is our gift, our '*present*' to YOU.



WHAT YOU GET

We have created one devotional and yoga session from each of our Grace x Strength signature programs. They are all beginner level sessions, so that everyone can enjoy.

1. Strength Builder - this one is a total body strength builder, incorporating some 'balancing' poses
2. Grace Flow - this is a dance-like session, with a focus on 'heart opening' poses
3. Stretch & Rest - this is a full-body yummy stretch session, to help create space and release tension.

GREETINGS FROM THE FOUNDERS

We pray that this *present* blesses you! We are here to build community face-to-face and online. We are very grateful for the connections that God has blessed us with to gather His people, to sing Him praise together, to do yoga together and to pray for each other.

YOU are called to be part of this community. Join in on our conversations on social media and give us feedback, so that we may grow together in Christ. We would love to hear from you on how this devotional has impacted you!

With Grace x Strength,

Josephine + Alyssa xx

CONNECT WITH US!



"The light shines in
the darkness, and the
darkness has not
overcome it."

~ John 1:5 (NIV)

HOW TO USE THIS E-BOOK

This table can help you choose the program to practice with, based on how you are currently feeling or which body part(s) you want to focus on.

Simply look under the table and reference the colour to the program with the same colour. Hope this is helpful!

Enjoy breathing, moving and being in HIS presence!

CURRENTLY FEELING	FOCUS
Stress / Anxious	Neck / Shoulders
Tired / Empty	Arms
Energised / Happy / Relaxed	Core
Need relaxation	Hips
Needing energy	Legs
Frustrated	Glutes

PROGRAM

STRENGTH BUILDER

GRACE FLOW

STRETCH & REST

To access the videos, click on the image of the video or enter in the URL **www.gracexstrength.com/present-ebook**.

When prompted, enter the password: **Presentgxs2018** .

Please note that you must 'accept cookies' on our website to access our videos.

DISCLAIMER

Any form of physical activity, including the use of equipment such as blocks and straps is potentially a hazardous one, which involves a risk of possible injury or even death. As such, you are advised to seek a physician's advice before beginning any physical exercise program or using any equipment suggested by the instructors of Grace x Strength shown in the video clips on Grace x Strength properties. Grace x Strength is not a medical organisation and the programs are not intended to replace, or to be construed as, medical recommendations. Neither the company, Grace x Strength, nor its instructors/representatives can give medical diagnosis.

You understand that any form of physical exercise involves strenuous physical movement, and that partaking in any such activity bears the risk of injury whether physical or mental. You understand that it is your responsibility to judge your physical and mental capabilities for such activities. By participating in classes and activities from Grace x Strength, you take responsibility to choose the appropriate level of classes for your skills and abilities, as well as for any mental or physical conditions and/or limitations you have. You understand that instructors may suggest the use of equipments for modifications of exercises or suggest physical adjustments, and that it is your sole responsibility to assess whether the suggestions are suitable for your physical and mental participation. You expressly waive and release any claim that you may have at any time for injury of any kind against Grace x Strength, or any person or entity involved with Grace x Strength, including without limitation its directors, principals, instructors, volunteers, independent contractors, employees, agents, contractors, affiliates and representatives.

STRENGTH BUILDER

Intention: Holy Confidence, not Self-Confidence

Author: Josephine Lau

Verse:

“But blessed is the one who trusts in the Lord, whose confidence is in him. They will be like a tree planted by the water that sends out its roots by the stream. It does not fear when heat comes; its leaves are always green. It has no worries in a year of drought and never fails to bear fruit.”

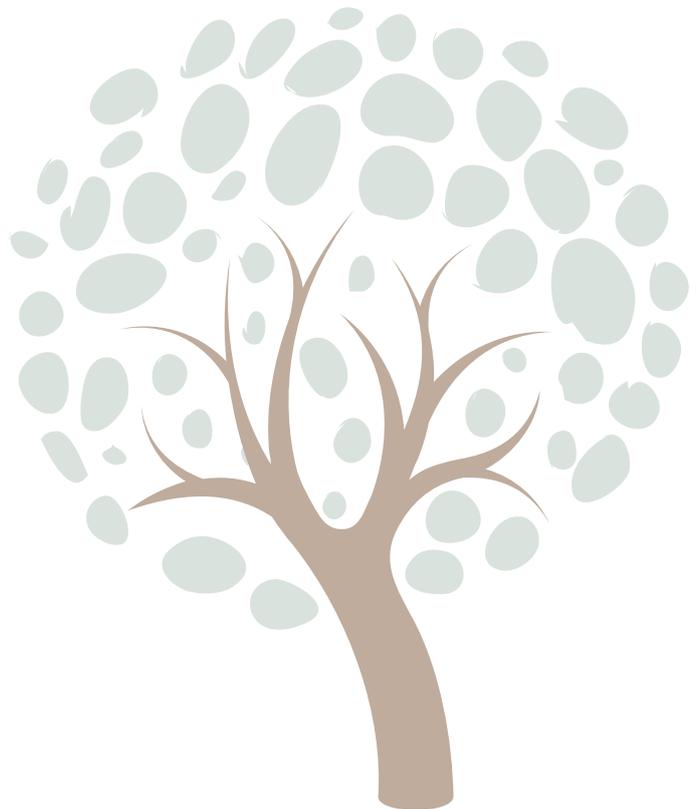
~ Jeremiah 17:7-8 (NIV)



DEVOTIONAL

Bring your mind to the image of a tall, strong tree with branches reaching in all directions and the rustling of its many leaves in the gentle breeze. Otherwise, look around you and see if you can find one. Observe the way the tree behaves. Does it strive? Is it anxious? Does it run? Observe its peaceful grandeur. It doesn't strive. It isn't anxious. It is still. In fact, it stands tall and firmly rooted, swaying to the natural rhythms of the wind and adapts to the seasons God creates for it.

What a beautiful imagery for how life should be. A tree planted by the water that sends out its roots by the stream. In other words, a deeply rooted faith that is not anxious yet blossoms through life's different seasons.



I'm a mother of 2 boys (3, if you count my husband!) and there's nothing more anxiety-inducing than seeing trying to fit in the schedule of all of these active beings around me, plus trying to find 'me time'. So much so that when I have 'me time', I find myself planning my schedule for the next available 'me time'. I suspect a lot of mothers will identify with this, but even if you're not, living in this digital age that demands us to be 'on call' drives some level of anxiety in everyone. If we're not intentional about where we anchor our faith, it can quickly spiral into a false sense of 'faith in action' - or filling every minute with scheduling, for you, for your family, for work.....like that schedule is going to save your life!

What saves your life is not your schedule. Counter-intuitively, that anxiety-inducing scheduling and planning of your life can do so very little when the unexpected happens. Am I getting somewhere here? Tell me that every step of your life has gone to YOUR plan? I'm guessing the answer is, 'no'.

What does save your life is *faith*. Faith in the hope and promise of a loving Father and Creator, whose plan is better than yours and whose love is probably greater than what you have for Him. Yet, He still loves and has better plans for you. What you need is not another plan on how to reciprocate His love with more doing, but just like the image of that tree. Stand tall, deeply rooted, swaying to the seasons that He has already planned for you. And your 'leaves are always green....and you have will have no worries in a year of drought and never fails to bear fruit.'

That said, please don't pull this out of context. Having a sound plan is necessary in life and there are plenty of Biblical teachings on effective planning. But today, if life's schedule is getting the better of you or when you next find yourself sucked into the anxieties of excessive planning, or even lacking thereof, just remember this verse.

If there's anything to take out from today's practice, it is this very image of this tree and the analogy we find in Jeremiah 17:7-8. *"Blessed is the one who trusts in the Lord, whose confidence is in him". Stand tall, my friends and focus on rooting down in faith.*

"Blessed is the one who trusts in the Lord, whose confidence is in Him".
Stand tall, my friends and focus on
rooting down in faith.

With Love,
Josephine xx

YOGA PRACTICE

Benefits:

Balancing poses require focus and concentration. It's hard to focus when your mind is wandering. So, this is a very grounding practice for days when you feel all over the place or frustrated. This practice can also be done joyfully on days when you're feeling energised and want to challenge your strength, which you seek from God. It's a great reminder of where you are rooted in faith.

Tips:

1. Root down from hip to soles of feet, and rise up from tail of spine to crown of head.
2. Have a soft gaze on something (The lower the focus point, the easier to balance. The higher, the harder)



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"But those who hope in
the Lord will renew their
strength. They will soar
on wings like eagles;
they will run and not
grow weary, they will
walk and not be faint."

~Isaiah 40:31 (NIV)

GRACE FLOW

Intention: Strength in Weakness

Author: Alyssa Mak

Verse:

"But he said to me, "My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness." Therefore I will boast all the more gladly about my weaknesses, so that Christ's power may rest on me."

~ 2 Corinthians 12:9 (NIV)



DEVOTIONAL

Do you remember the last time you felt incompetent? Maybe it was just yesterday that you felt that way. Maybe it is today.

It seems like everywhere you look, you see gifted people with great relationships and successful ventures and you wonder, “*Why can’t I be more like them?*” Or maybe you catch yourself reprimanding yourself for your shortcomings, “*I did it again.... I’m hopeless.*” Before you know it, these words of defeat replay themselves over and over and find a comfortable home in your head.

I remember walking out of my previous relationship feeling completely devastated. I felt like I messed up again. I had come out of an abusive relationship with a hot-tempered, violent gambler and I had not felt more ashamed of myself before; not because of the way the relationship ended but more also that everyone around me had already warned me of the consequences I would find myself in. But, of course, I didn’t listen. When the relationship ended as many had predicted, I wanted to dig a hole and hide. I felt like a failure.

For quite some time, I buried my face in tears and begged for the Lord to lift me out of the trenches. Amidst my downward spiral of negative thoughts, a verse started ringing in my ears - 2 Corinthians 12:9, “*My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness...*”

At first I was puzzled about why the Lord would reveal this particular verse to me. I couldn't understand how it could apply to my state of weakness and defeat.

God's power is made perfect in our weakness. Uh-huh, heard that before.... but what was that even supposed to mean for my situation then? *"Lord, I need strength right now, not another reminder of my weakness...Hang on...Wait.... Can my shortcomings really be exactly where God meets me?"*

When I pondered on the beauty of this verse, I came to realise that my weakness was never a surprise to God. He knows all of our weaknesses already and He wants to meet us right where we are. His power meets us right there!

I came to realise that my weakness was
never a surprise to God.

As we acknowledge that we aren't perfect and that we have weaknesses, we turn to God for His help. It is during those moments of weakness that He reveals perfection to us. That the missing link to perfection is His grace and power that we yearn for; and not in our own strive for perfection. How beautiful is that? Your 'shortcomings' do not come as a surprise to God. In fact, He isn't the one replaying those words of defeat in your head. His arms are wide open to embrace us while we are weak. His grace is enough for us all, and all that we need.

His grace is enough

We all experience times of devastation, disappointment, frustration and brokenness. The poignant reminder of this verse in 2 Corinthians is that God doesn't say that His power is made perfect in weakness AND strength. The apostle Paul who penned this is not saying that God's power will be revealed in your weakness and... oh yes, your strength as well. No, Paul is saying that God's power is made 'perfect' in weakness. Period. There is no mentioning of more strength required. So, today, let your mind be overwritten with words of grace, not defeat.

In today's practice, take time to reflect on the beauty of God's grace and how you can draw strength from Him.

Blessings,

Alyssa xx

“Likewise the Spirit helps us in our weakness. For we do not know what to pray for as we ought, but the Spirit Himself intercedes for us with groanings too deep for words.”

~Romans 8:26 (ESV)

YOGA PRACTICE

Benefits:

The focus of this practice is on core and arm strength. This flow will help energise you. We often only see where our weaknesses are and forget that God will provide us the strength where we are lacking. As we flow in this practice, may you be energised physically and spiritually as we move and meditate.

Tips:

1. Sync breath to movement as you flow through the practice.
2. Start and end the practice with focused breathing but while you are flowing, use the "Oceanic" breath
3. Aim to inhale as you lengthen your body, exhale when you release from a pose.
4. Keep a long flat spine and lengthen through the crown of your head.



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STRETCH AND REST

Intention: Let go and let Him

Author: Alyssa Mak

Verse:

“Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls.”

~Matthew 11:28-29 (NIV)



DEVOTIONAL

You're tired. You feel the weight of the world on your shoulders and you are just counting down the hours or days until you get a bit of breathing space. You just desperately need some rest. Stress is now a plague that suffocates many of us. Sometimes we notice the stress. Sometimes we don't; we get so used to the stress levels that we operate our daily lives as if stress is part of our fabric and we become numb to it. Nonetheless, whether you feel the stress or not, it consumes us physically and mentally.

A UK study published in "Health Statistics Quarterly" found that the highest percentage of suicide was on Mondays.

We've all heard the phrase "*Thank God it's Friday*" #TGIF #FriYAY. The world is dying to get a break from their stressful week. Why are we always so stressed? Well, if we were honest with ourselves, we probably overwhelm ourselves by taking everything on our shoulders, overcommitting and relying on our own strength, in turn feeding our egos that we can 'do it all'. I mean, as a Millennial, I was certainly raised to believe it. "*If you believe you can, you will.*" Right? Right now, you might be thinking, "*No, I really have the weight of the world on my shoulders, you have no idea!*" But what if I told you it doesn't have to be like that? That there is a way out?

Today, I want to share how God wants us to deal with our burdens. In the book of Matthew, Jesus tells us to go to Him when we feel burdened. He explains further that His burden is light and that we can find rest in Him. The latter speaks to me the most. We often hold onto stress like it's a treasure we can't let go of. *"The world is going to fall apart if I don't do this, don't do that! How am I going to pay this bill? How am I going to fit everything on my schedule?!"*

There was a time when I started getting a sudden onset of eczema and hives all over my body that lasted for days. Night after night, I was itching and could not sleep. I resorted to sleeping aids to help with my sleep deprivation but even then, I would still wake up several times in the night from the itching. I went to see the doctors and after all sorts of blood tests, allergy tests, ultrasounds etc, the results didn't indicate anything specific that would cause my condition. It became increasingly frustrating when I was sleep deprived and unable to operate at my usual pace. As I sought prayer from friends, they asked me if I was stressed. I vividly remember saying to them that I didn't feel stressed at all. But somehow, those conversations slowed me down and made me ponder whether I was subconsciously *'wearing the weight of the world on me'*.

As the condition continued to worsen and became unbearable, I finally realised the prayer I had to say. I prayed this prayer. *“Lord if it is stress that is keeping me up all night with this itching skin, I just want to let go of these burdens at your feet right now. Everything that I have been trying to hold onto, I just give it to you.”* I then started practicing my controlled breathing and slowly drifted into sweet slumber that very night. The next morning, I woke to the most pleasant feeling after a full night’s sleep. My eyes cracked open to a bright and sunny day. Hallelujah! It had been weeks since I had slept through the entire night!

There is so much power in letting go of things that don’t serve us well. That night I let go of the burdens and stresses I had held on to tightly. I let go of the need to know that everything was going to my plans. I handed over to the Lord. In turn, God filled me up with peace and I truly found rest for my mind, body and soul.

Today, Jesus extends an invite to you, to learn from Him and let Him carry your burdens. To allow Him to fill you up with peace and rest, you must create that space.

Empty your stresses and hand them over, in order that He may fill you up with His peace. Let go and let Him...

Let go and let Him...

Blessings ,
Alyssa

GG WITH GRACE X STRENGTH

YOGA PRACTICE

Benefits:

An all-rounded body stretch class from head to toe with lots of breath, leaving you lighter and helping you find some freedom in mobility and emotionally. This practice will bring your awareness to areas in your body that are tight and are holding on to tension, so that you can learn to relax those areas in your daily life; at the same time, learning to surrender any physical and emotional pains to the Lord.

Learning to breath through deep stretches is a great way to learn effective pain management through training your mind to focus on the breath and taking Jesus' yoke.

Tips:

1. In all stretches, always try to relax:
 - * Back of the head
 - * Area between the eyebrows
 - * Muscles behind the eyeballs
 - * Jaws
 - * Tongue
 - * Neck
 - * Shoulders
2. Take long inhales and slow down the exhales. Use the "Oceanic" breath - lips sealed, breathing in and out through the nose.



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"Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls."

~Matthew 11:28-29 (NIV)

“Though they stumble,
they will never fall, for
the LORD holds them by
the hand.

~Psalm 37:24 (NLT)

Thank you for practicing with us. If you enjoyed your experience with our "Present" e-Book, please share with us how it has impacted you, and tell your friends and family about it!

With Grace x Strength,
Josephine + Alyssa xx

CONNECT WITH US:

