



Start The New Year On The Right Track

Set aside nine minutes for a daily drive that can change your life

By Cindy Clarke

WITH ALL THE WELL-INTENTIONED resolutions that never fail to manifest as the clock strikes midnight every December 31, there is one that really has potential to rev up the New Year and keep going. It's called *Denise's Daily Drive*, an interactive how-to manual on wheeling through life, one day at a time, crafted by a dynamic motivational speaker with an automotive expert's precision and an artist's intuitive

vision. What makes Connecticut author Denise DiGrigoli's self-empowerment workbook different from the rest is her unique resolve to channel good out of all circumstances, to replace setbacks with renewed purpose and to turn aspirations into inspired actions. And to do it by actively meditating in a personal journaling exercise which requires just nine minutes a day – and some free flowing doodling – to set

it all in motion. Her methods are mindful, her process, provocative, her results, impressive.

An always-innovating entrepreneur, Denise DiGrigoli is in the driver's seat, navigating life's unforeseen twists and turns with an eyes-on-the-road determination and forward-moving vision that leaves others in her dust. But she's not interested in pulling ahead of the pack. She's on a journey to hand over the wheel to the rest of us, sharing the keys to a daily drive that is both empowering and enlightening.

The use of all the car metaphors here is not meant to drive anyone crazy. They are, in fact, the perfect vehicles, bear with me here, to explain her tried-and-true mind-mapping book, an interactive journal designed by Denise to put a positive spin on life. That she was brought up around cars and knows intimately the hands-on mechanics of actually making them run enhances their use.

A type-A businesswoman with a cache of business successes – marketing guru, art consultant, and motivational speaker to name a few – Denise grew up with working class roots in a small rural town in the Berkshire Mountains of Massachusetts, helping out at her grandparent's multi-tiered automotive services business at a young age. She always had an inner drive and determination and dreamed of heading out into the world to fashion her own future.

She graduated from the Fashion Institute of New York, one of the first of many life-changing turns she steered herself by jotting down her dreams, aspirations and feelings in a notebook she wrote in everyday. Lots of young girls share their private thoughts in diaries, but Denise's journal took on a more active and permanent role and continues today to help her map out her future.

"Journaling is a creative tool to help you manage and tune into your life," said Denise, explaining that it is an interactive process that allows you to track your experiences and frame new ones with positive, mindful energy. Art fills her soul so Denise fills the pages of her journal with pictures and images that express her creativity along with her visions.

"I take nine minutes each morning to shape my day and create possibilities for the week," she says. "Nine is historically a lucky number associated with good fortune and good outcomes and it is the perfect amount of time to chart a daily log without feeling guilty about taking it for yourself."

Denise exudes positivity. Negativity not only doesn't take a back seat in her daily drive, she doesn't allow it on the ride – or in her journal. She finds the good in the bad, turning her energies into thoughts, choices, events and celebrations that have some sense of promise in them. She believes in the notion that what you say and think you are... you are.

"The fuel we use to feed our minds is equally as important as the food we need to keep our bodies healthy," she says. She draws the comparison to keeping your car in optimum

condition by giving it quality care and regular tune ups to make it last for the long run, adding “the same care is required for the lives we lead.”

What we fuel ourselves with is a direct result of those choices.”

Start the process with a stash of fine-line pens, markers or any writing instrument that puts a little creativity and color into the pages of your journal and write three “I am” statements to guide your day. Don’t worry about being judged or ridiculed, this is your personal ashram



says Denise, a place where you are free to be and say whoever you want to be.

Think of three things you are thankful for and aspirations you strive for and write them all down in your journal, using it as a structure that you can lean on.

Craft thank you letters to people who have touched your life and record them in writing.

Forgive those who you have a “rub” with by writing a positive letter to their higher selves, and find positive benefits in the activities you accomplish during the day. Releasing mindful, purposeful messages to the universe can, and does according to Denise, set change in motion.

“Just the act of sending positive energy out to others has the power to put quantum physics in motion, says Denise, explaining the theory of “what you give out, you get back.”

This type of proactive meditation is key to the philosophy that drove Denise to share her motivational journaling techniques in her workbook, because, as she herself attests, it works on everything from attracting your soul mate to securing a better job and attaining financial stability, experiences she has manifested over the years. She began this practice to overcome the stress of life choices that turned out differently than she had planned, developing a systematic approach to creating change and positive growth that helped her tune into her own intuitive voice



a workplace guru, helping corporations provide a new generation of benefit-oriented work-life balance programs to their employees through her workshops and workbooks.

Denise’s *Daily Drive* enables people to turn chaos into calm by helping them manage their time, synthesize their feelings and actions, and find those connections that add real meaning to their lives. It is a process, Denise says, that “helps create personal clarity, as you become aware of how your mind, body and spirit influence every aspect of the life you experience.”

Those nine minutes she suggests you reserve for yourself are worth a lifetime of positive energy and can be a real course changer over the New Year.

You might want to make it a habit to wake up this January 1st and every day thereafter by looking in the mirror and greeting your reflection with a heartfelt “Hello, gorgeous!” – (you’re probably already smiling just by reading the words here!), followed by Denise’s suggested road map for a realistic, loving and prosperous day. They include “unloading the trunk” of any baggage (or anger) that may weigh you down and hold you back, “granting yourself a new license” to do or create something you’ve always wanted to do, pay it forward” and share the love with others to perpetuate more abundance in your life, and “write love letters that you’re too shy to send” because the energy given to writing can elicit the same vibration as saying the words in person. Denise also advises to chronicle things that actually happened, then write down things as you imagine them to happen.

“There is truth to the old ‘believe it and then see it’ and ‘ask as if you’ve received’ notions,” says Denise.

“This is where the magic is created and it unfolds over the days, weeks and months ahead.” □

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and guide her inner dialogues so that she could mindfully move forward.

Let you think this is a solely spiritually focused practice, think again. Denise’s journal combines the proven rewards of positive thinking with the very real benefits of creativity in building self esteem, improving relationships and encouraging goal setting and better work practices, letting them flow naturally to inspire, empower and enrich peoples’ lives. She is fast becoming

The author and creator of *My Daily Drive, An Agenda for your Mind, Body, Spirit and Lifestyle*, Denise DiGrigoli is a gifted public speaker, art professional and successful business owner in the marketing and creative services industries. She has served on numerous advisory committees and non-profit boards to mentor entrepreneurs and provide them with motivational tools to help them start and stay in business. She conducts mindful living workshops to inspire and empower attendees to develop a personal roadmap for their lives that identifies goals, guides choices and affects positive change.

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