

M O D U L E F O U R

Lasting Change For Your Gorgeous Mamahood

Welcome to Module Four. This module is so important. It's mostly about YOU. So many parenting programs just focus on the child and don't realise the importance of helping the mother have the inner and outer skills, self-care and the community support she needs. All of these are a MUST for getting the best results and changes that really last.

Remember back to the days before you had children. Think about how you managed your moods and emotional & physical stress. You knew what you needed to be able to cope and get yourself back to 'being in the green' part of your brain. You had your strategies, and all you had to think about was (mostly) yourself!

Now things are different. You have a child or children (and some would say a partner too!). You may be using some of the same helpful strategies to cope as you did earlier, but still feel so depleted! What you're most likely feeling is more than the physical exhaustion of caring for children, it's emotional exhaustion as well!

There's a good reason for this. In the first few years of a child's life, and to varying degrees right through to adulthood, a massive amount of emotional development takes place. Children need emotional nutrition in the form of energy from their parents and caregivers to fuel their emotional development. I liken this to a kind of emotional SUPERFOOD or GREEN JUICE for the BRAIN which we talked about in Module Three. Children literally cannot develop a healthy attachment which enables them to feel really good about themselves and to be great in relationships and life, unless they have this. It's no wonder you're feeling so drained. Your child is sucking the green juice life out of you!

This means that YOU need extra fuel more than EVER BEFORE. You need **extraordinary self-care** of the clever kind (we'll get to that soon). You need to be learning new ways to cultivate your energy and minimise energy leaks.

Along with self-care, when you learn powerful **inner skills to transform**, you become a better version of yourself and this hugely impacts your child... without you having to 'teach' a thing.

In summary, you need both- extraordinary self-care (Green Juice for your brain) & inner healing & skills to transform (Mama Transformation), along with good boundaries to protect your precious energy.

Protecting your mama energy with good boundaries

Earlier we talked about energy leaks. This is where your energy gets drained unnecessarily and often without you even knowing it. This can happen when your boundaries are not attuned to your needs.

Your energy vitality is affected by HOW you boundary with your child and with others in your life. In module three we talked about the two approaches to boundary setting that are needed (dissolving some and bringing others in closer), and the most typical results when these are unbalanced– the out-of-control mother and the disconnected mother.

Similar to the ‘out-of-control mother’ you might be a YES person and need to ‘bring your boundary in closer’. This can happen when you’re too focussed on the needs of others and not on your own. You may need to prioritise YOUR needs more, in relationship to other adults and society expectations, for the sake of yourself and your child’s increased energy requirements. By doing this you’re also modelling to your child the importance of expressing our desires, and honouring and asking for what we need to stay balanced.

OR

Similar to the ‘disconnected mother’ you might be too rigid and need to relax and let go of any unreasonable expectations of yourself and ‘move your boundary out further’. You could be missing out on an abundance of energy available to you in the ‘now’ moment, which you can access when you relax more and connect with the pleasure and joy energy that may be right under your nose! If this is the case it would be helpful for you to use some of the ‘green juice’ practices below to soften your body more, open your awareness to the gorgeous connection opportunities with your child and others, and invite more flexibility into the way you think and act and make decisions about what ‘rules’ are really necessary.

EXERCISE:

Go to your ‘[Lasting Change For My Gorgeous Mamahood Playsheet](#)’ and fill in the ‘Protecting my energy’ section. You might like to share your discoveries in the [Facebook Village](#). Download [here](#).

Pain Body Healing

Your Pain Body, which was introduced in Module One is a form of energy depletion. It saps your energy and can make you feel tired and moody. The Pain Body patterning is wanting to be healed. While external self care is essential to keep yourself in a good place, if you want real transformation you need to strengthen your practice of inner work as well.

I’ll be explaining a powerful neuroscience technique, Mama Transformation, to help your brain grow and transform these pain body experiences into ones that have less hold on you. At the same time you’ll be training your brain to notice and find evidence for the ‘good things in your life’, harness the transformative powers of embodiment, and develop the neural pathways for the qualities that you deeply desire.

MAMA TRANSFORMATION

As human beings we tend to focus on negative experiences or emotions. The capacity to put more weight on negative experiences than positive ones likely evolved to keep us out of harm's way. From the beginning of humanity our most important survival skill has been our ability to stay away from danger.

Hence this tendency to allow negative thoughts to overcome us happens by the nature of our brain. It's part of being human. Knowing this means we can stop being so hard on ourselves!

The good news is, we can heal our negative patterning and REWIRE our brain to focus on positive emotions and experiences. Therefore lead more happy and fulfilling lives.

A powerful way to do this is through a regular easy practice called the **Mama Transformation Technique**.

This technique, which is based on the latest brain science, teaches us to cultivate positive emotional states by linking difficult 'pain body' feelings with positive memories. We are able to use our positive memories and their associated positive emotions to manage and overcome difficult feelings in the present moment.

Doing this technique as a PRACTICE heals old negative patterning, and changes our emotional reaction into a more positive tone when we recall the same old painful thoughts, feelings or experiences from the past time and time again. We start to feel, act and speak from a new place of awareness and happiness. We literally rewire our brain. VERY COOL!

"I am getting much better at dealing with many of the difficult 'BIG' feelings associated with motherhood. The 'Mama Transformation' technique leaves me feeling so much better, lighter and more positive about my day to day experience as a mother".

~ Alex O'Callaghan {Brisbane}

You experienced a full-bodied 'taste' of the Mama Transformation Technique when we did the mama goddess vision setting exercise in Module One. In that meditation you were guided to take the qualities of your mama goddess deeper into a whole-bodied experience as if you were actually living it now.

Unfortunately most of us have lots of resistance to savouring positive experiences, really allowing ourselves to be with them, soaking in the feelings and sensing the body sensations. We are not inclined to let good experiences really sink into our body and brain because of our evolutionary negative brain bias. Activating POSITIVE STATES is an essential part in the process of this transformation.

Think about all your best memories. They're usually associated with big feelings and emotions, and ecstatic sensations. They remain vivid because you've 'remembered' them often, and given them heightened attention over an extended period of time.

The practice of giving heightened attention to a positive memory will consolidate it in your brain so that you can draw upon it, and over time it literally changes your brain's neural structure. Your negative memories and inclinations will have less power over you over time. Excited? I most definitely AM. This is incredible knowledge to empower all of us. We literally have the capacity to heal our unhelpful patterning, and not feel such a victim to our 'story'. We can change our mind, to change our brain to become more whole.

Four simple steps to Mama Transformation

STEP ONE:

Pay attention to a positive experience in the present moment OR remember one from the past.

So often good events or good aspects of yourself roll by without you even noticing. Set a goal each day to actively look for the experiences you need to feel whole. It could be any myriad of things that you need to fill the hole in your heart, soothe the unease in your gut, or calm your mind. Open yourself to notice and stay with the positive experiences. Have a daily intention to notice, notice, and notice them.

OR

Take the time to literally re-member the details of a positive experience from your memory. For example, the moment you looked into your child's eyes and connected with unconditional love, or the time when someone really validated qualities about you and so on. Notice the details, get a picture in your mind, get a full-bodied sense of the experience of what happened.

STEP TWO:

Once you've got the positive experience or memory **extend it in time and space. Keep your attention on it so it lingers.** Don't just jump onto something else. Notice any feelings of discomfort with staying with something good. The nature of working memory is that it's limited. Like a blackboard. It holds what you put on it, but if new stuff comes in it knocks off what used to be in working memory (which unfortunately was the positive experience that you're trying to help sink in). Instead try to keep your attention on it. That alone is a kind of mindfulness practice.

Let the experience fill your body with positive sensations and emotions. In a nutshell ...relish it, savour it. It's delicious!

STEP THREE:

Sense that the positive experience is soaking into your brain and body, registering deeply an emotional memory. There are a lot of different ways you can do this and to have it anchor in your body. You might like to imagine it sinking into your chest and back or sending nourishment to a beautiful lotus flower in your heart. You could get a sense of its energising vibrations in your gut or healing light into your womb. There could be lengthening in your spine or power in your legs. All of these are giving this experience a link to your body that you can later activate and draw upon through the body. **Keep the heightened feelings of this positive experience/memory sinking into your whole being-ness for 5 or 10 or even 20 secs.** Actively relax and open your body to fully absorb it. Trillions of cells opening, receiving and tingling with it. Turn the volume knob fully up on every little aspect of its deliciousness.

STEP FOUR: (Optional extra for healing the Pain Body)

Sense the positive experience is going down deep into old wounds and hurt places inside you (Pain Body), and soothing them and filling them up again, and replacing them over time with new positive feelings and views.

Often it works for the new positive experience to be the targeted antidote to the old negative one. Eg. new experiences of worth replacing old feelings of inadequacy, OR current feelings of being cared about and loved, replacing old feelings of rejection, abandonment, or loneliness. Or a current sense of your

strength replacing old feelings of being small or weak. **The replaced experience, the healed experience could be from your adulthood but usually the most valuable experience to replace is from your younger years.** The Pain Body is usually rooted in childhood experiences. That's what you want to heal to prevent the upsets from coming back and playing themselves out in your present-day motherhood.

The way to do this 4th step is really simple. All you have to do is have the new positive experience be prominent and in the foreground of your awareness, at the same time as the old pain is dimly sensed in the background of awareness. You're not going to forget about the experiences that happened. BUT those old events will gradually reduce, and lose charge of their painful associations and their hold on you. Hence you will not have the same powerful reactions that have you say, do and act in ways that you later regret.

Dr. Rick Hanson says : This is THE SINGLE MOST POWERFUL WAY I KNOW TO AUTHENTICALLY HEAL FROM THE INSIDE OUT .

All FOUR of **these steps are to be used in daily life. Often. 2, 3, 4 or more times a day! Each time its 5, 10, 20, 30 secs.** Its really not that big a deal to do. Its private. Its internal. You could do it at the park, whilst doing the laundry, in a conversation or before going to bed! But each time you are doing it you're repairing the ache in your heart, the sinking feeling in your gut, or the fear in your mind. You're creating new neural pathways of positivity and goodness in your brain.

“You'll actually notice a difference in a few days, and certainly in a few weeks if you stick with this practice. Over a few months you should experience a growing and fundamental shift in your experience of living. AND over a few years you should have a transformation in the characteristics of who you are and how you more positively and profoundly show up in the world”.

~ Dr. Rick Hanson, Author of 'Buddha's Brain'

EXERCISE:

Go to your '[Lasting Change For My Gorgeous Mamahood' Playsheet](#) and complete the exercise 'My best memories ever'.

To practice the Mama Transformation Technique download 'Mama Transformation Technique' audio [here](#).

GREEN JUICE FOR YOUR BRAIN

As mothers it can be so easy to put ourselves last. Firstly, our children need so much from us that we can wonder how it's possible to even THINK about ourselves, let alone do something about it. Secondly, most of us have been culturally conditioned to believe that neglecting our own needs to be of service to our children and others is being 'a good mother' and 'a very nice person'. In the old paradigm various forms of martyrdom were somehow valued and honoured as heroic. Thank goodness this is changing and you no longer need to feel guilty about giving yourself some well-deserved self care.

This is not to say that we shouldn't be helpful and go the extra mile for others. Instead it means that we should seek balance, have a more self-inclusive abundant mindset, and actively nurture ourselves in clever everyday ways. I call this **extraordinary self-care**.

The brain science today validates that self-care needs to be a priority. And by doing this you're providing your child with a mother who is 'in the green brain state' more often. What this does for your child is have them feel safe and secure and more likely to feel calm and grounded. It helps them feel hopeful that 'life is good', and develop that deep inner trust the 'everything is going to be ok'. Plus they have a mother who is more likely to be attuned to their needs, and able to bring play, joyfulness and vitality into family life.

Extraordinary self-care. I'm not talking about the luxury going on a 5 star weekend type (although this can definitely be a great form of self-care if it's possible for you!), but more of the everyday, every week to a fortnight, and every-so-often type. You need the types and amounts of self-care that shifts your brain state into the green, protects your precious energy from being leaked, and adds delicious goodness to ordinary moments.

There are many forms of self-care. These might include massages, time to walk in nature, a whole weekend away or even just a slow deep breath. You'll need to be getting constant mini doses of self-care as well as finding ways to schedule in bigger ones! and even Max it out occasionally! I love the system of having small, medium, large and maxi fill-ups. Just for fun I would liken it to a sip, a few mouthfuls, a glassful, and a large delicious drink of green juice for your brain!

What would these self-care 'fill-ups' look like?

A small fillup (a few secs- 10 mins): slow deep mindful breath, embodiment practices, gratitude, intention setting, mama transformation practice, listen or dance to a playlist of your three favourite songs, hugs three times a day (releases enough oxytocin to combat the cortisol from stress), eye contact with someone who is calm (this directly calms your nervous system), sit down and look out the window, go barefoot on the grass, meditate.

A medium fillup (30-60 mins): a walk, swim, dance or run, read an inspirational book or blog, mama transformation practice, get out in nature (eg. moonlight walk after dinner), guided meditation, journaling, beauty treatment, your creative passion.

A large fillup (2 hours- 1 day): picnic in the park, date with a friend, creative date with yourself (see 'The Artist's Way' by Julia Cameron), a body treatment, watch a movie, go to a concert, activities for passion & pleasure (releases feel-good chemicals oxytocin & dopamine into your body), focussed time of studying, learning, working on your passion business or a meaningful cause.

A super-doooper maxi (more than 1 day): family holiday, health retreat, your passion conference or workshop.

Other things that will help you be in the green, come back to the green more quickly, and stay in the green for longer

As well as the fill-ups above you can also add tweaks to everyday things that take NO EXTRA time. These are the fill-ups of the clever kind. It can be extremely stimulating and energising to bring aspects of beauty, spirituality and pleasure into your day. For example you might choose to drink your tea from a fine china cup, or bring a flower into your kitchen, create an altar with sacred items for you to feel connected to special memories, choose a body lotion with a sensual scent to uplift you, take the scenic route to your destination, play themed music to energise in the morning and calm in the evening.

In any of these fill-ups you might choose to not only connect to YOUR unique essence (your spirit or soul) but also to a divine or greater presence to replenish and fuel you. This can be in the form of prayer or meditation. It can be through connecting with Mother Earth as a living energy source or from any form of spiritual practice. Some mothers find it helpful to surrender their problems and hardships to a greater power to heal and transform. This can instantly calm a worried brain and help it relax and expand into the green.

Be a grounded and present mother. You need to make sure your feet are firmly on the ground so you can meet you and your child's everyday body needs. From this anchored place you will have the foundations to cope with the emotional waves and storms and have the best mindset to cope. Are you getting enough sleep, good nutritional food and movement? Physical exercise is vital. Your body is meant to be moving and produces 'feel-good' chemicals into your bloodstream when it does. How can you incorporate some form of exercise into your day? Even ten minute walks or dance breaks will make a big difference to how you feel physically and emotionally.

You might like to do an exercise class at home, or even better, arrange to have care for your child (even turn-taking with another mother) to attend a live class. There are so many options. I especially love movement practices that incorporate mindfulness techniques and breath awareness such as Nia and Yoga, the martial arts, the dance arts and the various forms of healing arts.

How is your physical and emotional health? Do you need a health check by a doctor or complimentary medicine practitioner? Have you been particularly sensitive, irritable, depressed for more than two weeks? If so you may need to check if you're suffering from post-natal depression or other forms of mental or emotional un-wellness. This is tough, and yet there is treatment that can help. Even though it may be difficult to reach out please seek professional support. You don't need to suffer this alone. In fact your child NEEDS you to get help. Your mental health has a direct impact on your child's wellbeing.

Who else is in partnership with you as carers of your children? Do you have a partner who is directly involved? If so there is a relationship here that also needs nurturing and care. How are you treating this relationship? Do you need to schedule in time to 'be' together, to 'have fun' together? Through what lense are you viewing him or her? If things are strained and fairly negative you may need to shift your focus to what is going well and bring in ten times more appreciations than corrections. Maybe you need to create some time when you're both 'in the green' to kindly and honestly communicate. Parenthood is one of THE most stressful situations that can happen to a couple. As you know it has a major impact on your life. Hence it deserves any sort of attention to help keep it moving forward rather than backwards. Many couples find relief and often a strengthening of their relationship when they seek professional couple counselling. Others choose other forms of personal support and healing to get similar positive results.

What are your passions and interests? What did you do to 'chill out and relax' prior to having a child? It's important to find ways to continue to do some of these things and stay connected to your own sense of self. You are more than a mother. You are YOU. Don't forget that. What else lights you up and makes your heart sing? Makes you feel excited and motivated?

Do what you love to do starting with the small stuff. Have fun. Be creative. Feel nourished. Rediscover adventure. Connect soulfully, Savour sensuality, and enjoy all the juicy deliciousness!

You cannot do this alone. Invest your time and energy into creating a village of support for yourself and your child. It's SO WORTH IT. Our brains have evolved to be connected in community. Your child needs to have other adult role models to help them regulate and learn new ways of being in the world. YOU need to have the love and support of others.

Now its YOUR turn to personalise your 'Green Juice for your Brain' Fillups. Go to your [playsheet](#) and fill out the section, 'My extraordinary self-care fillups'.

MY MAMA PLAN

Our left brain loves to have some structure. This allows our right brain the anchoring from which to flow. We don't have to be rigid about it. Having a general routine on which you base your day and week will calm you and your child's brain. You'll both be able to relax and anticipate what's coming next. Many mothers find it helpful to schedule their day into three chunks- morning, afternoon and evening.

Instead of it being all about the usual 'to do ' list these time chunks will focus on the important practices we covered in this program. A routine which includes embodiment practices & the mama transformation technique, intention setting, appreciations of your child and the evening 'telling the story of the day' will give you solid foundations as you continue your intuitive mama journey.

You get to personalise it to suit YOUR choices and needs. Add in the important things that will have your day feel complete. Have a look back at your list from 'my extraordinary self-care fillups'. Use these as well as your 'green juice for your child's brain' guide from module three.

EXERCISE:

Go to your 'My Mama Plan' playsheet and design your daily morning, afternoon and evening routine, as well as your important weekly dates. [Download the playsheet here.](#)

Wow. I can't believe we've come to the end. Really it's just the beginning. This is your chance to start again with a fresh new outlook and a treasure chest of new tools and practices to use in your motherhood and life. They will help you 'come home' to yourself, connect deeply with your child, and awaken your intuition with the aliveness and vitality of living an embodied motherhood.

This mama journey will never end, and I look forward to hearing your reflections when your child actually does turn 25 and you look back at the seeds of your mama desires that you planted during this program. These mama goddess desires coupled with your intentional actions over the days, months and years will have changed your child's trajectory forever. They will have developed positive skills and qualities and wired their brain to be able to reach more of their unique potential.

You will KNOW that no matter what happens you have done your best and that is good-enough. You have given your child an incredible gift. You have invested in the things that are going to make the BIGGEST POSITIVE difference in their life. YOU are AH-mazing.

Well done. I am SO MAMA PROUD OF YOU.

With love always,

Maria xo