

# FOUNDATIONS OF WELL-BEING

## *User Guide*

### **I'D REALLY LIKE TO WELCOME YOU TO THE FOUNDATIONS OF WELL-BEING.**

This User Guide offers tips for getting the most out of the program. Please adapt these suggestions—and the program as a whole—to your own needs. Also check out my [orientation video](#).

### **ENGAGING THE PROGRAM**

#### **Take in the Good**

In the Foundations program, you'll be:

- Getting good at *positive neuroplasticity*—using your mind to change your [brain](#) to change your mind for the better
- Tapping the power of positive neuroplasticity to grow important inner strengths—what I call the 12 Pillars of Well-Being: self-caring, mindfulness, learning, vitality, gratitude, confidence, calm, motivation, intimacy, courage, aspiration, and service

These 12 pillars come from applying the 4 “engines” of well-being—Recognizing, Resourcing, Regulating, and Relating—to our 3 fundamental needs: Safety, Satisfaction, and Connection.

In terms of these needs, the deep purpose of this program is to help you hardwire a lasting sense of **peace, contentment, and love** into your brain . . . and your life.

Sounds good to me!

#### **Enjoy the Buffet**

The Foundations program is chock full of resources. Each Pillar of Well-Being contains:

- Four presentations by me and four guided practices
- Two experiential creative activities
- One guest teacher interview
- Four self-assessment quizzes
- Related scientific papers, talks, videos, articles, slidesets, books, links, questions for group discussions, and personal practice checklists

We also have bonus interviews, tools for the program as a whole, and of course the vibrant forum with opportunities for chat with other participants.

I think of the program as like a restaurant with a huge buffet of many different yummy things. Now that you're in the restaurant, you can eat all you want . . . of anything you like . . . whenever it's good for you. So take your time and enjoy whatever “tastes” the best for you.

For example, you could go through every pillar while focusing on my guided practices and nibbling on other things—perhaps some of the creative activities or guest teacher interviews—as your fancy takes you. Or you could focus on one of your fundamental needs—safety, satisfaction, connection—that could use some special attention these days. Or you could bounce around picking and choosing whatever interests you the most at the time. Or just spend most of your time in the forums.

You can use this program as a resource for your life as a parent or your work as a coach, therapist, yoga teacher, consultant, or mindfulness trainer. It could be helpful for your personal healing, counseling, recovery. And it could enrich your creative process, self-actualization, or spiritual practice. Honestly, just knowing that you have made a commitment to your own well-being by joining the program will have plenty of value itself.

Whatever you do is fine! This program has tons of offerings in it, and I don't expect anyone to engage every single one of them.

#### **Go at Your Own Pace**

Please do this program at your own pace.

Some people like to think of it as “a year of practice,” exploring a new pillar of well-being each month. If you do this, it will take you an hour or two a week to engage the core content in each pillar: about ten or twenty minutes a day—not a lot of time, really. So even if you use the program this way, there is no pressure.

Some people will dive deeply into some topic for a few days or weeks, then take a break for awhile, and then come back.

Some will make a personal commitment to listening to a guided practice each day. Others will catch up on the forum each night.

Some will “save up” guest teacher interviews to watch over the weekend. Others will watch one of my presentations and chew on it for awhile, and then watch the next one when they’re ready.

It’s all OK. The program is set up so you can do it in whatever way works best for you. Everything in the program is available to download, so you can keep it as long as you like, and turn to it whenever you want. There is no hurry at all.

## Take Care of Yourself

This program is about your well-being, for real. It’s not psychotherapy, but still, any form of personal growth that is powerful enough to produce results is also powerful enough to stir things up that could be uncomfortable, even upsetting. This stirring up is likely a step on the way toward greater happiness, but meanwhile it can be challenging.

Sometimes the best thing to do is to ride it out, hopefully with mindfulness, curiosity, and self-compassion. Usually unsettled feelings pass relatively soon, often leaving insight and peace behind them.

Other times, it could feel right to you to step back and take a break. Do whatever is good for you.

## USING THE WEBSITE

We’re posting new material each week, and to see the latest offerings, just click on “Program Home” in the top navigation bar on the website, after you have logged in.

If you want to dive into a particular Pillar of Well-Being, click the one you want on the right side of your screen.

Each pillar has four themes. Each theme contains my presentation, guided practice, self-assessment quiz, and other resources that are related to it. To explore a theme, just click its tab on the pillar page.

If you’d like to check out the key resources in the program organized by type of resource—such as my guided practices or the creative activity videos—click on “Resources” in the top navigation bar.

My own presentations are offered in two parts: a talk and a practice. You can see these as videos or listen to them as audios.

We’ve included Forum and Chat features in the Foundations program to encourage a community to grow with a shared interest in well-being, to facilitate interactions around particular topics such as parenting or creativity, and to open up ways for participants to support each other. Please read the [Forum Terms of Use](#) before you go on it. To state the obvious: please have good intentions and use common sense.

If you would like to interact directly with other people in the program, use the Chat tab in the lower right-hand corner of your browser window. When you click on this, you’ll see other Foundations participants who are online, and you can post in the public chat room. You can also manage your own chat status: whether you are “online” or “idle.” If you choose “idle,” other participants will not be able to chat with you.

If you have questions, please visit the [FAQ page](#), which has a lot of helpful information.

## FROM ME TO YOU

It makes me really happy to think of this Foundations of Well-Being program as a collection of diverse, powerful resources accessible to anyone worldwide with an internet connection and some familiarity with English. (As you probably know already, we give full scholarships to anyone who needs one.)

Each of us has a personal path of well-being. Looking back, you can see the path you have taken so far, and looking ahead, you can see some of the possibilities.

May you make the most of your own path in this program, helping yourself and in widening ripples, other beings.

I wish you the best,

Rick