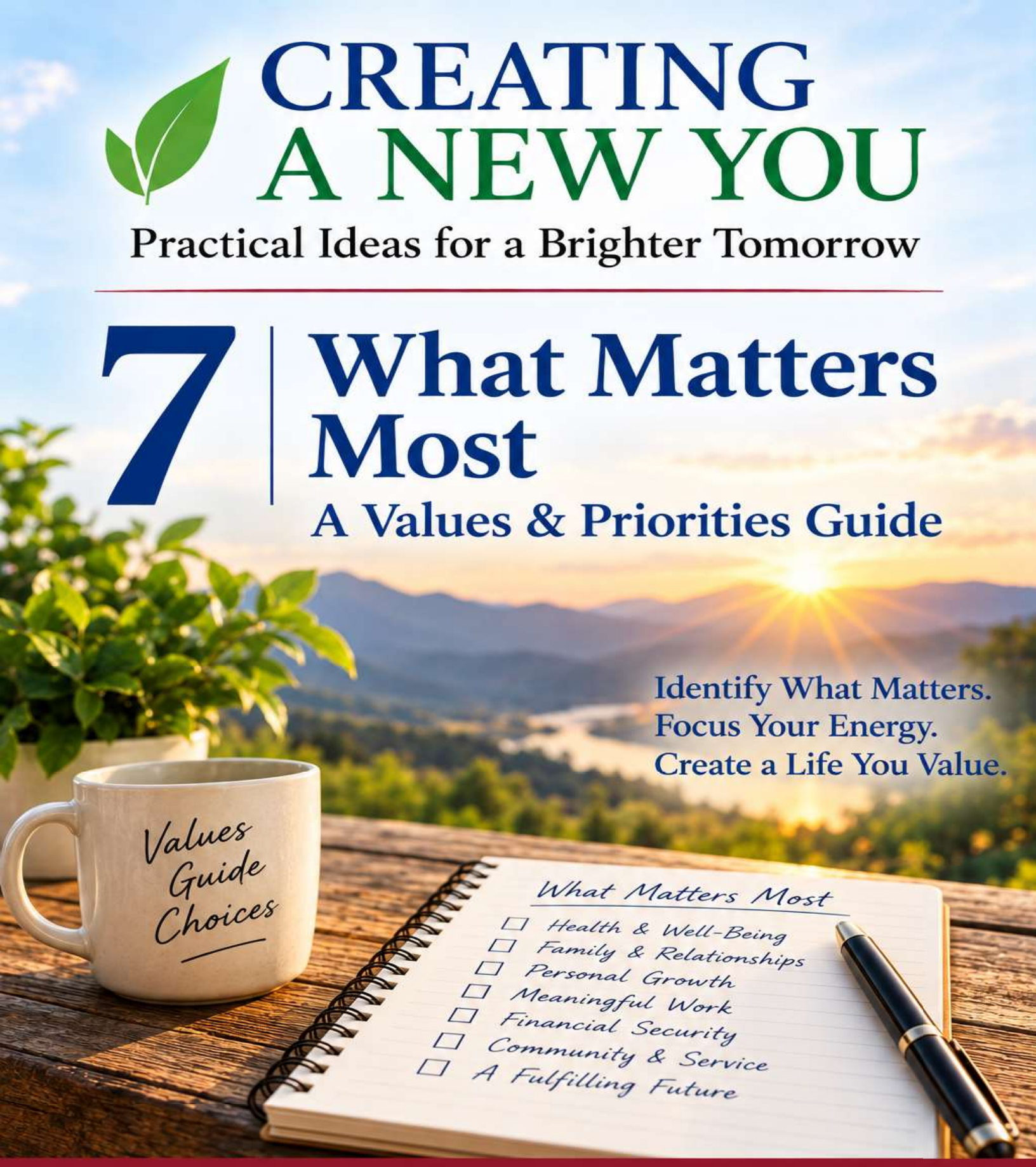
CREATING A NEW YOU

Practical Ideas for a Brighter Tomorrow

7 What Matters Most

A Values & Priorities Guide



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Prather Publishing Company

TAKING BETTER CARE OF YOURSELF

A Health & Well-Being Guide

Taking a Closer Look at How You Care for Yourself

Taking care of yourself can easily get pushed aside when work, family, responsibilities, and everyday life demand your attention.

You may know there are things you could be doing differently but haven't made them a priority. Or you may already be doing many things that support your health and well-being.

Taking better care of yourself does not necessarily require making major changes. It begins with looking at what you are doing now and deciding what changes are needed.

Use this guide to take a closer look at how you care for yourself and identify changes you may want to make.

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1. How Are You Taking Care of Yourself Now?

Think about an ordinary day or week.

Consider:

- Sleep and rest
- What and when you eat
- Physical activity
- Medical and dental care
- Time for yourself
- Stress and relaxation
- Activities you enjoy
- Personal care
- Time with other people
- Other things you do for your well-being

For example: You may eat fairly well, but some of what you're eating may not be healthy. Or you may eat a light breakfast and lunch while at work and then overeat when you get home. Perhaps you're eating well but get little or no physical activity. You may stay current with medical appointments but don't always follow the advice you receive. Or you may already have routines that help you feel and function your best.

What am I currently doing to take care of myself?

What seems to be working well?

Is there anything I have been neglecting?

2. How Do You Feel During an Ordinary Day?

Sometimes our daily experiences can tell us something deserves our attention.

Think about how you generally feel—while at work, after eating, while relaxing, or at different times during the day

For example: You may regularly feel tired in the afternoon, feel rushed when preparing meals, or notice that you feel better on days when you get outside or do something you enjoy.

How would I describe how I generally feel during the day?

When do I usually feel my best?

When do I tend to feel tired, rushed, or worn down?

Is there anything I am doing—or not doing—that may be contributing to how I feel?

3. Is Something You Need Being Put Off?

There are things we know we should take care of but continue to postpone.

It might be scheduling an appointment, getting more rest, becoming more active, changing something you regularly eat, or simply giving yourself some time away from your responsibilities. What is causing us to postpone things we know we should do? Is it because they seem boring, we lack interest or motivation, or they seem too difficult? Identifying the reason may be part of the solution.

For example: You may have been meaning to schedule a routine dental appointment for months. Nothing is preventing you from making the appointment—it simply keeps getting pushed to another day. Why is that?

Is there something related to my health or well-being that I keep putting off?

Why have I been putting it off?

What would it take for me to address it?

4. What Would You Like to Do Differently?

After looking at what you are currently doing, decide whether something needs to change. Write down what you would like to change. Decide which one you want to address first. Devise a plan and get started.

For example: You may want to go to bed a little earlier, prepare more meals at home, take a walk several days a week, schedule an overdue appointment, or make regular time for an activity you enjoy. Write down what may be keeping you from doing what you want to do. Seeing it on paper and referring to it occasionally may help you make the change.

What would I like to do differently?

Why is this important to me?

How might this change improve my everyday life?

5. Choose One Thing to Work On

Choose one thing that is important enough for you to work on now.

It doesn't have to be the biggest issue. Starting with something manageable may make it easier to get started.

For example: Instead of deciding, *"I need to get in better shape,"* you might decide to take a 20-minute walk three days this week. Instead of deciding, *"I need to eat better,"* you might begin by preparing lunch at home several days this week.

The one thing I want to work on is:

Why did I choose this?

What would I like to see change?

6. What Could Help You Make the Change?

Knowing what you want to do and actually doing it can be two different things.

Think about what would make the change easier to carry out.

For example: If you want to walk in the morning, having your clothes and shoes ready the night before may make it easier to get started. If you want to prepare lunch at home, having what you need available may make it less likely that you'll buy lunch instead.

What would make this easier for me to do?

Is there anything I need to prepare or arrange?

Is there anything likely to get in the way?

What could I do if that happens?

7. Decide What You Will Do

Turn what you want to change into something you can actually do.

Be realistic about your time, responsibilities, and circumstances.

For example: Rather than saying, "*I'm going to take better care of myself*," make it specific: "*I'm going to walk for 20 minutes after dinner three days a week*".

Deciding what you will do, when you will do it, and how often you will do it is a step toward taking better care of yourself.

What will I do?

When will I do it?

How often will I do it?

When will I start?

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8. See What Difference It Makes

After you've been taking better care of yourself for a while, make note of whether it has changed your daily living experience and how you feel.

The purpose is not to determine whether you did everything perfectly. It is to see whether the change is helping and whether it is something you want to continue.

My Check-In

What did I plan to do?

What have I actually done?

What difference have I noticed?

Take a Closer Look

What is working?

What has been difficult?

Do I want to continue?

☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ I need to make some changes

What's Next?

Based on what you have learned, decide what's next.

Do you want to continue what you are doing, change your approach, or turn your attention to another part of taking care of yourself?

My Commitment

The change I want to make is:

The first thing I will do is:

I will start by:

A Final Thought

Taking care of yourself is a lifelong process. It takes time to learn what works for you and put it into practice. Developing good habits, managing your time, eating properly, staying active, and perhaps finding a spiritual connection can all work together as part of taking better care of yourself.

You don't have to change everything at once. Look at what you're doing now, decide what deserves your attention, and start the process.

Taking care of you can lead to a better you!

Creating a New You
Put the ideas into action-one step at a time.

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