A MONTHLY WELLNESS MAGAZINE BY THIS BALANCE LIFE

THE BALANCE Journal

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The Art of Receiving

Gratitude, Everyday Comfort & Meaningful Connection

When Gratitude and Difficult Feelings Meet

Holiday Boundaries That Make Room for You

Small Rituals. A More Peaceful Season.



Find Your Balance. Live With Purpose.
thisbalancelife.com

Dear Beautiful Soul,

I'm so grateful you're here.

November invites us to notice what nourishes us: a familiar voice, a shared meal, a quiet moment, or someone who asks how we are and stays to hear the answer.

As Thanksgiving approaches, we often think about what we can give. We prepare, organize, lend a hand, and make room for others. Those gestures matter. This month, I also invite you to consider what you are willing to receive.

For many of us, giving feels familiar. Receiving can feel more complicated. We brush aside a compliment, turn down an offer of help, or say, "I'm fine," when we could use a little support.

In this issue, The Art of Receiving, we'll explore the small ways we can welcome care into our everyday lives. Sometimes that means accepting a kind word without explaining it away. Sometimes it means asking someone to share a responsibility or giving yourself an unhurried afternoon.

You do not have to do everything alone to be capable. Your needs deserve attention alongside the needs of the people you love.

And if this season feels complicated, there is room for that, too. Gratitude can sit beside grief, uncertainty, or a hope that hasn't yet come to life. You can appreciate a moment of comfort while being honest about what feels difficult.

My hope is that these pages offer you something nourishing: a new perspective, a practical idea, or permission to let yourself be cared for.

As you move through November, ask yourself: What would I welcome into my life if I believed I didn't have to earn it?

Perhaps it is rest. Perhaps it is support. Perhaps it is a little more joy.

Whatever your answer, I hope you make room for it.

With warmth and gratitude,

Nicole Holmes ♡

Founder, This Balance Life

You can be grateful for what you have and still honor what you need .

PAUSE & RECEIVE

What is one thing I could allow myself to receive this month?

You Deserve to Receive, Too.

You may be the person others call when they need something. You remember the details, make the plans, listen closely, and find a way to help.

Giving can become so familiar that receiving feels like unfamiliar territory.

When someone offers a hand, you say, "I've got it." When a compliment comes your way, you explain why it wasn't such a big deal. When someone asks what you need, you struggle to find an answer.

If any of this feels familiar, take a moment to notice it with kindness.

Perhaps you learned to value independence. Perhaps being dependable has become part of how you see yourself. Or perhaps asking for help has felt disappointing in the past. Whatever your experience, you can begin exploring what receiving looks like for you now.

Receiving can be ordinary and small: letting someone carry a bag, accepting a meal, asking a colleague to share a task, or allowing a friend to listen without rushing to reassure them.

> **"You can remain capable while welcoming support."**



You can remain capable while welcoming support. You can care deeply for others while allowing your own needs to matter.

This month, consider the moments when care is offered and you instinctively turn it away. Before answering, pause. Is this something you would like to accept? Do you feel comfortable with the person and the offer?

You get to choose what feels right. Receiving is an invitation, and there is room to practice at your own pace.

Start with one small yes.

A thank-you without an explanation.
An honest answer to "How are you?"
An offer of help you allow yourself to accept.

There is room for you in the care you so freely give.

PAUSE & REFLECT

When someone offers me care or help, what is my first response?

Small Ways to Let Care In

One small yes can make room for something nourishing.

Receiving begins in everyday moments. You don't need to make a grand gesture or change every habit at once. Choose one small practice that feels comfortable, and notice what happens.

01 ACCEPT A COMPLIMENT

When someone recognizes your effort or offers a kind word, pause before minimizing it. Try saying, "Thank you. That means a lot." Let their appreciation reach you.

02 LET SOMEONE SHARE THE LOAD

Think of one responsibility you could share this week. Be specific: "Could you handle dinner tonight?" or "Could you take this part of the project?" Give the other person room to answer, and welcome the help you agree on.

03 SAY WHAT WOULD HELP

People who care about you may not know what you need. You might say, "I'd love some company," or "I need someone to listen for a few minutes." A clear request gives connection a place to begin.

04 MAKE ROOM FOR REST

Set aside a little time to sit, read, take a gentle walk, or enjoy your tea without rushing. Notice whether you feel the urge to fill that space with another task. Let a few quiet minutes belong to you.

05 RECEIVE IN A WAY THAT FEELS RIGHT

You can accept an offer, ask for something different, or decline it. Your comfort and boundaries matter. Choose support that respects your needs and allows you to remain yourself.

06 LET APPRECIATION BE ENOUGH

When you accept kindness, notice any urge to repay it immediately. A sincere thank-you can be enough in that moment. You can enjoy the care without turning it into another item on your to-do list.

You don't have to carry everything to be worthy of care.

YOUR NOVEMBER PRACTICE

One thing I will allow myself to receive this week is...

Thankful, Even When Life Is Complicated



Appreciation and difficult feelings can share the same space.

November often arrives with invitations to count our blessings. Around tables, in conversations, and across our screens, we hear reminders to be thankful.
But what if your heart feels full of more than gratitude?

Perhaps you are missing someone. Perhaps money is tight, a relationship feels uncertain, or the year has unfolded differently than you hoped. You may appreciate what you have and still feel tired, disappointed, or lonely.

There is room for all of that.

Gratitude can begin with something small and true. A friend who checks in. A meal that brings comfort. A few peaceful minutes before the day begins. You can notice these moments without asking them to erase what hurts.

Instead of asking, “Why can’t I just be grateful?” try asking, “What feels difficult today, and what is offering me a little support?”

Both answers deserve your attention.

You might be thankful for your family and need time to yourself. You might value your work and feel overwhelmed by its demands. You might enjoy a holiday gathering and miss someone who once sat beside you.

Allow your experience to be honest.

This season, let gratitude take a shape that fits your life. Write one sincere sentence. Thank someone for a specific kindness. Notice a familiar sound or a small moment of ease. If gratitude feels hard to reach today, begin by naming what you need.

There is no requirement to feel festive on schedule. You can choose a quieter celebration, welcome company, change a tradition, or ask for support.

As November unfolds, give yourself permission to hold appreciation and longing together. Let the good moments matter. Let the difficult feelings have a voice. You can be grateful for what you have and still honor what you need.

Both answers deserve your attention.



PAUSE & REFLECT

Something that feels difficult right now is...

Something offering me comfort or support is...

Make Room at the Table for Yourself



Your time, energy, and needs belong in the plans, too.

The holiday season can bring familiar comforts: favorite recipes, stories around a table, and time with people we care about. It can also bring full calendars, complicated relationships, and pressure to make everything feel special.

Before you plan what everyone else needs, pause to ask: What would help me feel present and cared for this season? Your answer belongs in the plans, too.

Your answer belongs in the plans, too.

1. CHOOSE WHAT MATTERS MOST

Think about the part of the holiday you genuinely want to enjoy. A conversation? A shared meal? A quiet morning? Let that guide your choices. You can simplify a menu or skip an extra activity to make space for what matters.

2. SHARE THE RESPONSIBILITIES

You don't have to prepare, host, organize, and clean up alone. Ask people to bring a dish, help with setup, or take care of the dishes. Make the request before the day begins so everyone knows how to contribute.

3. GIVE YOUR PLANS A BOUNDARY

Decide how much time, energy, and money you can comfortably offer. Try: "I'd love to join you from two until five," or "I'll bring one dish this year." A clear, kind answer helps others understand what you can do.

4. MAKE CONNECTION PERSONAL

Meaningful connection can happen at a large gathering, over tea with a friend, or through a phone call. If you're spending the holiday on your own, consider whether you'd enjoy a check-in with someone or a small ritual just for you. Choose company and traditions that feel welcoming.

5. LEAVE ROOM TO PAUSE

Step outside for a few breaths, sit somewhere quiet, or take a short walk if you need a break. If a conversation feels uncomfortable, you can say, "I'd rather talk about something else," or excuse yourself.

6. LET THE DAY BE HUMAN

Meals can run late. Plans can change. Feelings can be mixed. You can enjoy a warm moment without making the whole day perfect. Notice what feels good, and offer yourself some patience with the rest.

MY HOLIDAY INTENTION

One thing I will simplify, share, or protect this season is...

Mind • Body • Heart • Purpose

Four ways to welcome care into your everyday life.

Care can reach us in many forms: a quiet moment, a nourishing meal, a kind conversation, or encouragement to pursue something meaningful. Pause to notice which kind you could welcome today.



MIND
Welcome a Little Quiet

Give yourself a few minutes without notifications, news, or another task. Sit somewhere comfortable and let your attention settle on what you can see or hear. You do not need to solve anything in this moment.

TRY THIS: Put your phone aside for five minutes. Ask yourself, "What can wait while I take this pause?"

REFLECT: What would give my mind a little more space?



BODY
Listen to What You Need

Notice how your body feels before deciding what comes next. Perhaps you need a meal, a drink of water, a stretch, a comfortable seat, or an earlier night. Let that information guide one caring choice.

TRY THIS: Pause between activities and ask, "What would feel supportive for my body right now?"

REFLECT: Which physical need have I been putting off?



HEART
Let Kindness Reach You

When someone checks in, listens, or offers a kind word, give yourself a moment to receive it. You can share honestly with someone you trust and accept their care without finding the perfect response.

TRY THIS: Accept a compliment with a simple "Thank you." Notice how it feels to leave it there.

REFLECT: Who helps me feel heard and cared for?



PURPOSE
Welcome Encouragement

Think of something meaningful you would like to explore or continue. You may welcome a fresh perspective, a helpful introduction, or a word of encouragement. Support can accompany your own decisions.

TRY THIS: Ask someone you trust, "Could I talk through an idea with you?" Be clear about whether you want listening, feedback, or practical help.

REFLECT: Where could encouragement help me take a small next step?

MONTHLY AFFIRMATION

I welcome kindness, support, and moments of joy. My needs deserve care, too.

MY SMALL YES

Today, I will make room to receive...

SIMPLE PRACTICES • EVERYDAY CARE

The November Wellness Toolkit

INTRO

Small moments of care can fit into an ordinary day.
Choose one practice to enjoy this month, and return to it when it feels helpful.

MORNING MOMENT

Three Minutes of Gratitude

Minute 1: Settle into a comfortable seat and breathe naturally. Notice one thing around you that offers comfort.
Minute 2: Name one specific kindness or everyday moment you appreciate. It can be as simple as a warm cup or a thoughtful message.

Minute 3: Ask, "What do I need today?" Choose one small way to care for yourself.

If gratitude feels distant, simply notice what is supporting you right now.

MOVE WITH CARE

A Gentle Five-Minute Break

1 minute: Walk or march comfortably, standing or seated.
1 minute: Slowly roll your shoulders, then reach your arms forward and relax.
1 minute: Alternate gentle heel raises while holding a sturdy chair, or lift your heels while seated.

1 minute: Reach one arm toward the ceiling at a time, within a comfortable range.

1 minute: Settle into a comfortable position and breathe naturally.

Move at your own pace. Keep movements comfortable and skip any that cause pain.

SEASONAL NOURISHMENT

Pumpkin-Spice Oatmeal

Makes 1 serving
Ingredients:

- 1/2 cup rolled oats
- 1 cup milk of your choice
- 2 tablespoons plain pumpkin puree
- 1/4 teaspoon cinnamon
- A small pinch of ground ginger
- 1 teaspoon maple syrup, optional
- 1 tablespoon pumpkin seeds, optional

Method:

Combine oats, milk, pumpkin, and spices in a small saucepan. Bring to a gentle simmer and cook for 5–7 minutes, stirring, until the oats are tender. Add a splash of milk if needed. Spoon into a bowl and finish with maple syrup and pumpkin seeds if you like.



Take a moment to enjoy the warmth, aroma, and first bite.

NOVEMBER AFFIRMATION

I welcome kindness, support, and moments of joy. My needs deserve care, too.

AN EVENING CHECK-IN

What offered me comfort today? What would help me feel cared for tomorrow?

CARRY THIS WITH YOU

Let one small act of care be enough for today.

PAUSE & REFLECT

What Am I Ready to Receive?

A quiet page to notice your needs and make room for care.

INTRODUCTION

Settle into a comfortable seat. Take a moment to notice how you feel, and let your answers be honest. You can explore one question or spend time with all four.

01 **What do I freely give others that I struggle to receive myself?**

Consider kindness, patience, encouragement, time, or practical help.

02 **Where could I use support—and what could I ask for?**

Name one specific request and someone you feel comfortable asking.

03 **What ordinary moment has brought me comfort recently?**

Think of a conversation, a familiar place, a small kindness, or a moment of ease.

04 **What would make this season feel more nourishing for me?**

What could I simplify, welcome, or make room for?

MY NOVEMBER INTENTION

This month, I will allow myself to receive...

CARRY THIS WITH YOU

My needs deserve care, too.

THE NOVEMBER WELLNESS CHALLENGE

Seven Days of Receiving





One small practice. A little more room for care.

INTRODUCTION

For the next seven days, explore one small way to welcome care. Start whenever you like, and adapt each practice to your comfort. You can repeat a day or skip a practice that doesn't feel right.

- ☐ **DAY 1** — **LET A COMPLIMENT LAND**
  When someone offers a kind word, simply say, "Thank you." Pause before explaining it away. If no compliment comes today, revisit a kind message you've received.

- ☐ **DAY 2** — **ASK FOR ONE SMALL THING**
  Choose a specific request: help with a task, a few minutes of listening, or company on a walk. Ask someone you trust, and give them room to answer.

- ☐ **DAY 3** — **WELCOME A MOMENT OF REST**
  Set aside ten mindful minutes to sit, read, or enjoy your tea. Notice the urge to fill the time, and allow yourself to pause.

- ☐ **DAY 4** — **NOTICE AN EVERYDAY COMFORT**
  Pay attention to one small thing that supports you: a warm meal, a familiar song, or sunlight through a window. Stay with it for a moment.

- ☐ **DAY 5** — **LET SOMEONE SHARE THE LOAD**
  Accept an offer of help that feels comfortable, or arrange to share one responsibility. Be clear about what would help.

- ☐ **DAY 6** — **MAKE ROOM FOR CONNECTION**
  Invite a conversation with someone who helps you feel heard. Share one honest thought, and give yourself time to listen, too.

- ☐ **DAY 7** — **RECEIVE WITH APPRECIATION**
  Thank someone for a specific kindness. Let them know what it meant to you without rushing to promise something in return.

A MOMENT TO REFLECT

Which practice felt most natural?

Which felt unfamiliar?

What would I like to carry into next week?

MY NEXT SMALL YES

I will make room for...

GENTLE REMINDER

This is an invitation, not another task to get right. Let your needs and boundaries guide you.

MINDFUL MOMENT

A Moment to Receive

Settle. Notice what supports you. Allow a little ease.



INTRODUCTION

Give yourself a few quiet minutes. Read slowly, pausing between each step. You can keep your eyes open or let your gaze soften. Choose what feels comfortable for you.

01 • **SETTLE**

Find a comfortable position, seated or lying down. Notice where your body meets the chair, bed, or floor. Let the surface beneath you hold some of your weight.

02 • **NOTICE YOUR BREATH**

Allow your breathing to follow its natural rhythm. There is no need to deepen it or change it. If focusing on your breath feels uncomfortable, notice a sound in the room or the feel of your feet instead.

03 • **WELCOME A LITTLE EASE**

Notice your shoulders, hands, and jaw. If it feels comfortable, let them soften a little. Nothing needs to be forced. Simply make room for a moment with fewer demands.

04 • **PICTURE A PLACE TO REST**

Imagine a quiet, welcoming space: a chair beside a window, a peaceful garden, or a place you know well. Notice one detail that feels comforting—the light, a familiar sound, or the warmth of a cup in your hands. If imagining a place feels difficult, stay with something you can see around you.

05 • **ALLOW YOURSELF TO RECEIVE**

Bring to mind a small kindness, an offer of support, or a moment of comfort. You don't have to create a particular feeling. Just notice what comes to mind. Silently offer yourself these words:

I can welcome care.

I can ask for what I need.

I can let this moment be enough.

06 • **RETURN GENTLY**

Notice the room around you. Move your fingers or toes if you like. Take your time before returning to your day. Ask yourself, "What is one small way I could carry this care forward?"

AFTER THE PAUSE

Right now, I notice...

One thing that would support me today is...

There is room for you in this moment.

STAY CONNECTED

A Little Balance, Delivered to You

Make space for yourself each month.

Let *The Balance Journal* be a quiet invitation to pause, reflect, and reconnect with what matters.

Each issue from This Balance Life brings thoughtful articles, practical wellness tools, mindful moments, and reflection prompts to support your mind, body, heart, and purpose.

WHAT YOU'LL FIND:

- Encouragement for the season you're in
- Simple practices to bring into everyday life
- Journal prompts for reflection and clarity
- Gentle reminders to welcome rest, support, and connection

Would you like to receive future issues?

Visit our *Connect with Nicole* page and complete the contact form. In your message, write: ***"Please subscribe me to The Balance Journal."*** Include the email address where you would like to receive the journal.

Request Your Subscription

thisbalancelife.com/contact



A few moments for you. A little balance to carry forward.

Find Your Balance. Live With Purpose.

THIS BALANCE LIFE
A SEASONAL INVITATION

A Little Stillness *Before the Season*

HOLIDAY RESTORATIVE YOGA

Before the gatherings, the giving, and the full calendar, make a little room for yourself.

Join Nicole Helmus of This Balance Life for 75 restorative minutes of gentle, supported rest in the peaceful setting at the Roslyn Salt Cave.



LET THIS BE YOUR HOLIDAY PAUSE

Rest your body

Settle into supported poses without rushing or striving.

Make space to breathe

Step away from the to-do list and enjoy a quiet moment.

Return to what matters

Carry a little more presence into the season ahead.



SATURDAY, DECEMBER 12, 2026

12:15 PM–1:30 PM • 75 minutes • Roslyn Salt Cave

Make this moment part of your holiday plans.

To register, connect with Nicole
thisbalancelife.com/contact

Find Your Balance. Live With Purpose.


Happy
Thanksgiving
From my family to yours!
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