

STAND OUT



YOU ARE WORTH IT

ALL SPINES WELCOME

FIVE STEPS TO
BEGIN LIVING
AN
ALIGNED LIFE

"What the world needs now is healthier people.

What makes a healthy person is healthcare and habits that support the body, not work against it!"



~Dr. Devin Shea

President/CEO of Aligned Life Chiropractic and Wellness

Problem:

Living a "normal" life currently means living in a way that is **incongruent** with what your body requires in order to express health. Spending hours with your head flexed downward to stare at a screen, crashing at speeds well beyond what your body is capable of withstanding and competing against the biggest and fastest humans who have ever lived are all new challenges the structure of your body is having to withstand every day. Processed food, sugar and tricky marketing strategies create confusion around what to put in your body. Sitting for the majority of your work day, long travel days on airplanes and most forms of entertainment create an incredibly sedentary lifestyle. Growing feelings of isolation due to purely surface level connections made on social media, a growing disparity between rich and poor and "Presto!" You have the **sickest population** of humans in our species history. I hope that what I am saying is sinking in for you.



Solution:

If on the other hand you recognize this is where you are headed and decide you want to STAND OUT, then I am excited to welcome you to your new lifestyle! We call it living an Aligned Life.

Now, the name is not important. You can call it anything you like. Some people have called it having their mojo, or being in a flow state, being in a sweet spot, being on purpose or having their chakras aligned. What is important however, are the principles associated with getting to that place as often as possible and attempting to stay in that space for as long as you can. I want you to think of this Aligned Life state like floating down a fast moving stream in a canoe. Progress comes easily. All you have to do occasionally is drop your oar in the water to steer. You aren't having to paddle to keep yourself going.

I want you to know that living an Aligned Life is not a destination. In fact, it is rare to be completely "Aligned". It is fleeting and much more of a journey. In fact, If you think back over your life and contemplate what has helped you feel "Aligned" previously, that same recipe of actions will often not help you get there again. This is because your goals will have changed, the world will have changed and who you are will have changed. It is sort of like trying to hit a moving target.

Step 1:

The first step towards living an Aligned Life is you must **know yourself**. You absolutely must work towards developing an understanding of who you are. The reason why this is the first step is because the only person who can determine if your current actions are considered healthy for you, is who? You. For some people taking a nap in the middle of the day is self care and for others it is an avoidance tactic. For some people working out super hard 6 days a week is self care and for others it is a recipe for disaster. For something to be seen as self care it must be viewed as such by the person doing the activity at that time.

The opposite of self care is called "numbing". Numbing represents an unhealthy relationship with an action, product or person. Becoming self aware, helps you to discriminate between when you are providing self care and when you are numbing.

Knowing yourself also helps you establish boundaries. Boundaries are standards of living that we set up for ourselves and uphold even in the presence of others. Boundaries allow you to say no to things that reduce your energy and happiness and yes to things that increase your health. Examples include; not taking work calls after business hours, not drinking sodas, not looking down while using your cell phone and so on.

What's odd about boundaries is when we see other people who have set them, we see that person as inspiring. They are attractive and magnetic. Yet when we go to create boundaries for ourselves, we see them as an act of selfishness. We feel shame and guilt for prioritizing our own best interest instead of those around us. This is purely a trick of the mind and not the reality.

The one key that I have found that will decide whether someone is willing to speak up for themselves to do the things necessary to keep them well, is self worth. If you feel worthy of taking care of yourself, you will. Even if you have to inconvenience other people, even if you have to speak up, even if it is awkward or your peers will make fun of you. If you feel worthy, you will do what your mind and body are telling you and you will be more well because of it. If you have been told your whole life; "you are a nobody", that "you don't matter", that "you are not special", if you have been told, "who do you think you are", then you will see self care as an indulgence or a luxury or something that is great for "those other people, but just not for you". And you will suffer the consequences.

The truth is, you are absolutely worth it, you always have been and always will be. So own your truth, work towards knowing yourself deeper, set your boundaries and reap the benefits!

Question:

What is the most common group of people in our population who consistently forgo self care?

Mother's! Moms are willing to put everyone else first. They are the primary supporter and nurturer in most families and because of this put themselves last when it comes to their needs. To often I hear from Mom's (and Dad's) that the healthcare needs of their children come before their own. This thinking error must be corrected to understand that in order for Mother's (and Father's) to contribute to the lives of their children they themselves must be well. It is no excuse to place yourself at the bottom of the priority list when it comes to taking action to get and stay healthy. Suffering in silence is only doing you and your family a disservice. Eventually you will become a liability rather than the glue that holds your family together.



Step 2:

The second step towards living an Aligned Life is you must **take full responsibility for everything** in your life. I am just going to let that bomb sink in... This includes the good, the bad, and the ugly things.

Taking responsibility for the good things in our lives is often difficult, especially as an adult. We rarely take time to celebrate our wins. Often, as soon as we complete a project, no matter the size, our next question is "what's next?". This pattern leads to feeling our efforts are insignificant and limits the joy we should have from doing good work.

Taking responsibility for the bad things in our lives must take place if we are looking to improve. This is where the growth takes place. Not in our wins, but in our losses.

Owning our mistakes increases the respect we have for ourselves and receive from others. The mark of a champion is someone who can come back from a loss and not fold.

Lastly, in order to step into living an Aligned Life we must accept responsibility for the ugly things in our lives. These are the things we don't talk about very often and only to a select number of people. Often, these are the things that were done to us. Although it

may be difficult, we must take responsibility for these things. To be clear, if something was done to you, I am not saying it is your fault. However, how you respond to that situation, and the meaning you assign to it is your responsibility. Unfortunately, often these events have quite a bit of control over us. The great news is, as soon as we decide to own our narrative about these ugly experiences, we take the power back. We regain control and cease to allow the event to run our lives.



Step 3:

The third principle of living an Aligned Life is you must maintain a **long term focus**. When it comes to the world of performance athletics, it is common for people because of competition or ego to sacrifice their long term health in order to gain short term success. Have you ever done this? Have you ever pushed beyond your physical limits in order to win an event even though you knew your body would suffer because of it? This lack of considering longevity as a high priority has been the downfall of too many talented athletes.

In contrast to this approach, if you are willing to keep your focus on your long term vision of your future then two things immediately happen. Number one, making decisions in your day to day life becomes much easier.

This happens because you know where you are headed. You have established your north star.

The second thing that happens when you focus on the long term view of your life is it becomes easier for you to deal with the day to day challenges you will face along that path. For example, if your long term goal was to run the Boston Marathon and cross the finish line. Picture your arms raised and thousands of people clapping. But, if all you thought about was every training run you had to do, it would be very unlikely for you to complete your goal. Similarly, if you decided that your north star was optimal wellness and you stayed focused on how amazing it would feel to

be really strong and flexible, it would be much easier for you to tolerate the self care action steps that are necessary for you to achieve it.



Step 4:

The fourth principle of living an Aligned Life is **listening to your body** and acting upon what it is telling you.

Remember, your body is designed to alert you to when something is going right or wrong. We typically call these body signals, "symptoms". Examples are pain, tightness, soreness, numbness, tingling, burning, weakness, etc. Unfortunately, sometimes it can be very difficult to decipher what each of these signals mean.

And in some cases it may be necessary to pull in an expert to help you determine the next best action.

That being said, it is common in the typical gym environment or athletic arena where the stereotype is the tougher you are the cooler you are; we often attempt to silence the body's communication.

To illustrate this phenomenon let me tell you a story from my personal life. In high school I played quarterback for the varsity football team. All was going well until one day during practice I was calling the play in the huddle. In a split second it became almost impossible to breathe. Not willing to show "weakness" I ran the play that I called and then went over to the sidelines. Still not willing to show any pain or express my concern for fear of my teammates making fun of me, I sat there for over an hour gasping for breathe. After practice was over I made it down to the locker room. At this point my entire body had turned ghost

white. I was sweating like crazy and still couldn't get a full breath. Continuing my silence, my coach finally saw me sitting on the bench with all my gear on and called an ambulance to take me to the hospital. In the emergency room I learned that I had actually collapsed my lung and that if I hadn't gotten treatment soon I would have passed out and potentially died, having never told anyone!

Please, do not make this same mistake regardless of the severity of your symptoms. Listen to your body and act upon what it is telling you, even if you have to swallow your pride. Asking for help when you need it is a sign of strength, not of weakness.



Step 5:

The last principle of living an Aligned Life is **prioritizing self care**. In order for your body to function optimally you must provide four key ingredients. You must Eat Well, Move Well, Think Well and Be Structurally Well. The challenge is that these must all be done at the same time and over a period of time to allow for healing. If you are not providing these ingredients regularly throughout your entire life, you will force your body to adapt to the environment you have placed it in. Although your body may be able to tolerate that stress for a period of time, eventually it will break down and cause sickness or injury. I have often found that most people are aware that in order to be healthy they must provide proper nutrition and exercise. However, managing our stress levels and ensuring that the structure of our body is strong is often a blind spot. Blind spots are areas of our health that are consistently not addressed. They are things that are not considered or prioritized to be important. These blind spots are what I see cause the most disease and knock people off of their regular training commonly. Remember, your structure must match your desired lifestyle. By prioritizing the action steps each of these ingredients require, you are doing your part in keeping your body healthy for life!

Bonus:

If there were a 6th principle in living an Aligned Life it would be to **connect with your community**. It is an innate desire to share life experiences with other human beings. At Aligned Life Chiropractic and Wellness our secret sauce is the people who choose to make our practice their home. People from all walks of life including; grandparents, professional athletes, children, small business owners, teenagers, stay at home moms and many more come together to create a vibrant and supportive culture. It is absolutely astonishing to witness what can happen when a group of like-minded, amazingly healthy and passionate people get together in support of one another. Through quarterly events such as hikes, berry picking, educational workshops, beach days and charity donations, our practice members have developed deep relationships with each other and the Aligned Life staff.

Thank you for choosing Aligned Life Chiropractic and Wellness for the healthcare needs of you and your loved ones. We look forward to seeing you in the clinic!

~Dr. Devin Shea D.C.

What to do next:

- To **schedule a new patient exam** or your next appointment at Aligned Life please go to www.ALChiropractic.net
- For **more information** on Aligned Life Chiropractic and Wellness please go to www.AlignedLifeWellness.com
- For **videos on improving your body position habits** go to www.alignedlifewellness.com/patient-education/
- To read our **blog** go to www.alignedlifewellness.com/blog/
- To listen to our **podcast** go to www.alignedlifewellness.com/podcast-episodes/
- **YouTube** Channel: @Dr Devin Shea
- **Instagram:** www.instagram.com/alignedlifewellness

