

Everyday Healing

Create Your Own Vision Board

What is a Vision Board?

A vision board is a collage of pictures and phrases that represent what you want in your life; your deepest dreams and desires. It can represent activities you want to do, emotions you want to feel, work you would like to have, places you want to live or visit, relationships you are seeking, or things you want to own. The process of creating and displaying it can propel you forward toward your goals.

Why make a Vision Board?

Just like a car needs enough gas in its tank to make a long journey, you need enough motivation and ambition to move forward on your healing path.

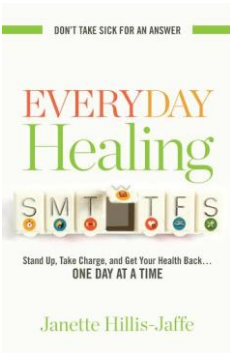
If you are having a hard time moving forward in your healing, it may be in part because you don't have a clear vision of what you want your life to look like when you get healthier. A part of you may have given up on achieving your goals. Or a part of you may have forgotten what your dreams are, leaving you living a life for which you may be less than enthusiastic about showing up. Or, you may still have high hopes for your dreams, but could use a concrete reminder of what they are and how much you want them

Days 7 and 8 in my book *Everyday Healing*, explore the importance of having an ambitious health goal, or inspiring destination. Check out those sections to remind yourself of why this is essential and how to think about your inspiring destination. A vision board is a valuable tool in that process. Spending some time imagining what you really want for yourself, looking at beautiful images and letting yourself think about how you might achieve your goals can provide a great deal of the fuel you need to stay committed to your healing work when the going gets tough.

5 Steps to Make a Vision Board

1. Collect Your Supplies.

You'll need a bunch of magazines that you don't mind cutting up, glue stick, scissors, and a piece of poster board. You can make your vision board as large as you want, but I recommend making it about 12 inches by 12 inches. That limits the number of images you can put on it and allows you stay a bit more focused on what your deepest desires are for



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your future. Of course, if you find some big images that you love, or want a bigger board for any reason, that could be perfect for you.

Collect a variety of magazines that have different kinds of inspirational images and phrases, including people, nature, homes, and work environments. You can invest in the project by buying a handful or ask at your dentist or doctor's office if you can have some of their old castaways.

You can also do this digitally and download all your images and phrases online. In that case, you will need a computer, some good quality photo printer paper, a working printer, the poster board, scissors and glue. If you have some graphic design skills and can make a large collage on your computer that you could have printed at a print shop, that is an option also. Before you begin, you can do a search for "vision boards" online to see examples that might give you ideas as well.

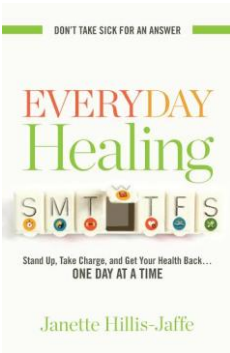
2. Take some time to focus your attention before you start.

Set aside one or two chunks of time when you can go through your magazines or online sources and gather images and phrases for your vision board in a focused, relaxed way with no interruptions. Ideally, do it in a pleasant environment with music that boosts your mood without being overpowering. Before you begin each time, take a few minutes to set an intention for what you are doing. Say a little prayer, do a short meditation or journal briefly to open your mind to seeing the best possible representation of the future you want, with joy and excitement and without desperation or anxiety.

3. Collect images and phrases.

Go through your magazine, looking for images and phrases that inspire you or give you a real sense of joy. When you see one that moves you, cut it out and put it aside. If you are collecting images online, you can do searches on Pinterest or Google Images, or a similar site, for words that are part of your vision for yourself *like exercise, hiking, teaching, romance, home, or family*, and see what comes up. Again, when you are moved by an image, you can download it onto your computer and save it in your "Vision Board" file. A technical point – most images from the internet can be saved to your computer by right-clicking on them with your mouse and then clicking on "Save image as . . ."

You can collect a wide variety of images or focus on a specific theme. If you have a specific vision for your future, as an author or Olympic runner, for example, then you can look for



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images related to that topic and make a whole vision board focused on that theme. On the other hand, if you are less sure about your goals and are using this exercise to inspire you, you can collect a variety of images, see which ones move you the most and include pictures that represent different parts of your life on your Vision Board.

Lastly, it's a good idea to include images and phrases that represent what you need to do to achieve your goals also. If you want to be stronger, include images of people working out or doing yoga. If you want to write a book, include images of writing. This will help to associate those activities with a great future in your mind.

4. Place images.

Go through all the images and phrases you've collected and choose the ones that inspire you the most in numbers that you think will fit on your poster board. Be selective. Only use pictures that really represent what you want. If you have pictures that represent more than one part of your life, like health, family, career or spiritual wellbeing, make piles of images in the same categories to give you a better sense of what you have.

Once you've chosen your top images, begin placing them, without glue, onto your poster board. You can group images from the same category together, or scatter them around the poster board. Remember that often less is more. Having just a few images focused on one or two aspects of your life can help you focus on those goals and be very powerful. If you feel moved to include many images from different parts of your life, that could be right for you now.

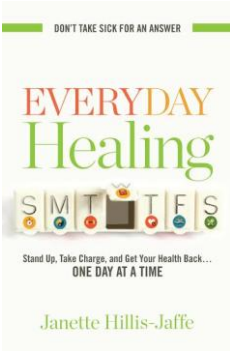
Once you have the images and phrases arranged how you want, glue them all down and you have your vision board.

5. Display and Use Your Vision Board.

Choose a place to post your vision board where you will see it regularly. Take a few minutes once or twice each day to spend some time focusing on it and envisioning your dreams in as much detail as possible. Your bedroom or office are often good places for posting it.

Manifesting My Vision Boards

In the fifth year of my illness, I made a small vision board that included a picture of Cross-country skiers as its centerpiece. One year later, after having worked my tush off to find a new



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healing path and then stuck to a strict new diet and exercise regime for several months, I got out my skis and was able to go cross-country skiing for the first time in over six years.

After I got well, I made a vision board with a mock-up of a book cover for my book, *Everyday Healing*, as its centerpiece. It had a different title and a pretty low quality picture on the cover. But, I kept it on the wall near my desk and over the next three years, I got an agent and a publisher and have now achieved my dream of changing people's lives with *Everyday Healing*.

It's not magic. It takes hard work to make the dreams represented on a vision board come true. But, the board itself can give you the fuel you need to do that work and might just also work in other, more mysterious ways that we don't understand. Give it a try and enjoy the process!

To your health,
Janette