HORMONAL SYNC SYSTEM

Session 3: Stress Manual
As you watch each of the three videos for this Session, you will know exactly when and how to refer to these materials. In addition, we’ve provided you with a detailed checklist on the following page to help guide you through!

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Follow along with the checklist in order. It is important to note that the videos and food experiments are a must! The supplemental readings, marked with an *asterisk, are optional. There's a lot to do because we want you to have everything possible to make the transition to Hormonal Health. But don't get overwhelmed, do what's essential and let your natural curiosity guide you.

To keep organized, look at your calendar and decide for the 10 days that you have to complete this Session, on which specific dates you’d like to carry out each step. Place those dates in the “Take Action Date” box. Afterwards, place a check mark in the “Complete!” box so you know you’ve got to the important things in the session.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Take Action Date</th>
<th>Complete!</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Video 1: Science – Stress, from Gah! To Ah!</td>
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<tr>
<td>*Are You Working as Hard as You Can? Why?</td>
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<td>*Comfort in a Bottle</td>
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<td>I’ve been enjoying the hot water bottle while</td>
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<td>Breathing Exercise</td>
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<td>*Medicinal Foods &amp; Supplements for Adrenals</td>
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### The Stress Checklist, Continued

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<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
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<tr>
<td>Caffeine Experiment</td>
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<td>Coffee has the following effect on my body</td>
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<td>Dairy has the following effect on my body</td>
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<td>Video 3: Energy – The Power of Choice</td>
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<td>Interview your Inner Critic</td>
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<td>Identifying Patterns that Hold you Back</td>
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<td>Patterns that I plan to let go of are</td>
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<td>Feminine / Masculine Energy Balance</td>
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## The Stress Checklist, Continued

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<th>Activity</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Feminine Masculine Energy Balance Quiz</strong></td>
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<td>I will rely on my Feminine energy more when</td>
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<td><strong>+ BONUS FLO Support!</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Online Forum Posts</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Individual Counseling Sessions</strong></td>
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<td>Wisdom from my counselor with me</td>
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Are you working as hard as you can? Why?

As women, we must pay attention to the physical and emotional consequences of burning out due to too much work, not enough rest and fun. Many women’s health concerns can be traced to an unbalanced relationship between rest and work:

- Fibroids and endometriosis (which Dr. Christiane Northrup calls the illness of competition)
- Overeating leading to weight gain and digestive disorders (stress management strategy)
- High levels of stress hormones in the body leading to fatigue, depression, digestive disorders, heart disease

Why do you continue to push yourself so hard? Listen to the messages from your natural environment and from within your own body that are saying: “Expand, rest, play, laugh, become inspired, find your passion, do nothing, enjoy!”

Re-evaluate your behavior right now. Take some time to answer these questions:

- Who is watching you and judging you to make sure you keep working?
- What bad thing do you fear would happen to you if you took a day off, an inspiration date with yourself to enjoy nature, art, and rest?
- What messages did you receive as a child about the value of play vs. the value of work?
- Who is a role model in your life of someone who works a lot? Of someone who plays a lot?
- How are those people treated by their community?
- Do you believe that in order to receive love you have to be useful, or do it all, or keep everything under control?
- Are you afraid to stop working? What thoughts and feelings are you trying to avoid?

-I’m in the wrong job….
-I’m in the wrong relationship….
-I should have more money…
-I should be more organized…
Women are living with a legacy of doing too much for others and feeling guilty for taking time for ourselves. And we’re paying for it with our health. Women who go all the time and never check in with how they are feeling physically or emotionally often overuse sugar and coffee as a way to keep going and keep themselves distracted, even when they are exhausted. Using these stimulants can significantly impair neuro-endocrine function, wreaking havoc with insulin levels, serotonin, adrenaline, and cortisol, leading to bad moods, vicious PMS, low libido, and menstrual disorders of many kinds.

If you’re committed to having healthy hormonal function, if you’re ready to put aside the sugar, caffeine, and demanding voices in your head, here’s your big chance! Take an inspiration day for yourself. Connect to your creativity and passion. This helps so much in balancing the flow of hormones and keeping your reproductive energy healthy.

**Transformational Exercise**

Take 5 minutes right now
Put both hands over your lower abdomen.
Close your eyes and breathe deeply.
Let your mind become still.
Imagine that you are a little girl.
Ask yourself: What would be really FUN right now? What would feel safe and restful right now?

*Take good care of that little girl and make time for that play and that rest.*
Comfort in a Bottle

Treatment for hormonal health problems doesn’t have to be expensive or come in fancy packaging. Many effective home remedies have been handed down to us by generations of resourceful women who lived before the age of modern pharmaceuticals. One of our favorite tools is a true classic...

The Hot Water Bottle

Once you use a hot water bottle, you won’t know how you got along without it. It applies soothing heat therapy conveniently to any part of the body. When you heat a body part, your system sends more blood to that area. Local circulation increases, so your blood delivers more nutrients to the surrounding tissues. The blood and lymph vessels expand to help relieve congestion, tension, and stuck energy. The surrounding muscle fibers warm, loosen, and... ahhhhh... relax.

These physiological responses to heat also cause your body to release endorphins, the body’s own “feel good” pain reliever. So while you bring healing to the area where you directly apply the hot water bottle, you also induce a state of deep relaxation for your whole body. Studies show that this “relaxation response” creates the best internal conditions for your body to heal itself naturally.

Directions:

- Fill a hot water bottle with warm to hot water from your sink (not boiling water).
- Sit or lie comfortably and apply heat to desired area.
- Wrap the bottle in a towel if initial heat feels too intense.
- Enjoy for at least 30 minutes.
- Hot water bottle will stay warm for up to 2 hours.

Suggested Uses:

- Chest: relieves congestion, improves circulation in key area of lymphatic
system, opens heart energy.

- Abdomen: improves digestion, relieves constipation, triggers deep relaxation, deepens sleep, relieves anxiety.
- Lower abdomen: pain relief for menstrual cramps, improves circulation to ovaries and uterus*; when used with castor oil pack helps to shrink fibroids and reduce PMS.
- Lower back: relieves aches and pains, warms kidneys and adrenal glands that are cold/deficient due to fatigue and burnout, triggers relaxation.
- Hips/Butt: relieves aches and pains, especially healing for women because our bodies store memories and emotions related to feminine experience in this area.
- Feet: warms and relaxes hard-working feet, creates grounding and continued abdominal healing as it draws circulation and energy from upper to lower body.

NOTE: If you are pregnant, consult your midwife or doctor before applying heat directly over your uterus.

**Your Homework Assignment**
Place a hot water bottle over kidney/adrenal area a few nights a week while you watch tv or lay in bed.
Breathing

Breathing is essential for life. After all, the first thing we do when we enter the world from our mother’s wombs is to breathe in! After that time, breathing becomes automatic and we rarely get the opportunity to learn the importance of our breath, how to breathe properly, and what differences in our breath patterns signify. We typically take our breath for granted until fear or an imbalance constricts our breathing.

The breath connects all your organs and systems. That is why it is so important to build greater awareness for your breath. The more aware you are of your breathing, the better you are able to recognize what is happening inside your body, including infections (a throat full of phlegm must be constantly cleared), feelings (you begin to breathe more shallowly when angered or stressed), and reactions to physical activity (exertion usually leads to huffing). Breathing into your body allows you to fully inhabit it and to be in better communication with yourself and others.

Breathing exercises are one way of enhancing your awareness of your breathing patterns, reducing stress, cleaning toxins from your chest and abdomen, and supporting you in all aspects of communication. Below is a three-part deep breathing exercise for you. Try it alone, with a friend, or everyone in your office! You should practice three times a day, preferably before meals or at least two hours after you have eaten.

Directions:
Sit with your back erect. Place one hand on your belly button and one hand on your sternum. Close your eyes. Breathe deeply into the pit of your belly, allowing your lungs and abdomen to expand outward. You should feel your belly protrude as you breathe in. Hold your breath and breathe in again, this time breathing through the hand on your chest. You should feel your sternum
rise as your chest cavity opens and your ribs expand. Hold your breath and breathe in one last time, filling the top of your lungs and your throat. It helps to straighten your posture to get in one last sip of air. Next, breathe out slowly, gently constricting your airway, releasing air first from your throat and the top of your chest, then from your sternum and ribs, and finally, your belly. Force the air completely out of your lungs using your abdominal muscles. When all your air has been released, begin the breathing cycle again. Repeat for a total of five in-and-out breathing cycles.
Medicinal Foods for Kidney/Adrenal Support

Traditional Chinese Medicine teaches that each major organ system in the body correlates to a time of year and to an emotional state. The system views our whole experience of life as cyclical and seasonal. As women, we know for certain that seasons take place internally as well as externally!

The kidneys/adrenal gland system correlates to the following energies and ideas:
Season: winter
Element: water
Body Function: urination
Organs: kidney and bladder
Action: preservation by will power (courage)
Emotion: fear
Sound: groaning

Because winter is the season of kidney/adrenal energy, many kidney foods are typical winter foods, but you can find them in stores at any time of year:
Grains: buckwheat
Beans: aduki, black, kidney, and pinto
Vegetables: sea vegetables; mushrooms; burdock, beets, and other root vegetables; hearty greens like kale and mustard greens
Nuts and Seeds: cranberries and blackberries; chestnuts and walnuts
Animal Foods: shellfish, duck, ham, pork, eggs (small quantities)
Seasonings: tamari and miso
Teas: bancha, kukicha, and other roasted teas

Internal Seasons:
In the cold months of winter, we go deep into our bodies to find inner warmth. It is a time of storage and self-preservation—of quietly nurturing new ideas that we want to see bloom into life in Spring. Winter is a good time to reflect, meditate, and rest.
You can conjure the feeling of winter as you take this time to nurture your kidneys. Turn your focus inwards and try to rest and nurture yourself more. The healing foods restore balance and build up energy at the root of your hormonal system, so you can look forward to being more active and energized in the future. But for now, eat and rest.

Notice that with your internal seasons, menstruation is your internal winter. Your body wants to slow down; you may feel more reflective or more intuitive. A key to your healing is respecting this internal winter—pushing yourself to be active and extroverted during this time stresses the body and depletes kidney/adrenal energy.

**Supplements for your Adrenals**

Jarrow Adrenal Optimizer
Vitamin C
Ashwaganda
Rhodiola
B Complex
Vitamin D3
Holy Basil Tea or Supplement

**Supplements to support your Nervous System**

Passion Flower
Oat Straw
Caffeine Experiment

Understanding Adrenal Burnout
Testing yourself to see the effect that caffeine has on your mood, energy level, and body tissues will allow you to determine if you have a dependence on this stimulant, how it impacts you, and if you are experiencing any symptoms of hypoglycemia or adrenal fatigue (two conditions that accompany many menstrual and sexual health problems). **Try this experiment only if caffeine is a regular part of your diet.** Caffeinated beverages include: coffee, soda, black tea, caffeinated water, and green tea.

To get started, follow this 6-day program: On Day 1 and Day 2, drink your regular caffeine drink at your usual times of the day—but pay close attention to how you feel. On Days 3, 4, 5, replace your caffeine drink with a lower caffeine or no caffeine beverage PLUS, one additional 16 oz glass of water a day. On day 6, resume your normal caffeine schedule.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Your Caffeine Drink:</th>
<th>Replace With:</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Coffee</td>
<td>Green tea, black tea</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Decaf coffee</td>
<td>Decaf black tea, kukicha twig tea</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Soda</td>
<td>Sparkling fruit flavored seltzer, fresh brewed iced tea</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black tea</td>
<td>Herbal tea, hot water with lemon</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Green tea</td>
<td>Herbal tea, hot water with lemon</td>
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</table>


**Note:** Be aware that if you have a true caffeine addiction you will probably experience headaches and irritability if you have no caffeine for 3 days. You can moderate this response by choosing beverages with less caffeine, but if you are in great discomfort, discontinue the experiment.
Caffeine Alternative Drinks:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What I drank</th>
<th>Time</th>
<th>How I felt...</th>
<th>right after:</th>
<th>2 hours later:</th>
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<tr>
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<td></td>
<td>Mood:</td>
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<td>Mental focus:</td>
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<td>Energy level:</td>
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<td>Cravings:</td>
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<th>Time</th>
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<th>right after:</th>
<th>2 hours later:</th>
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<td>Mood:</td>
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<td>Cravings:</td>
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<td>Cravings:</td>
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Dairy Experiment: Testing Food Sensitivities

Testing yourself to see what effect dairy foods have on your digestion, body tissues, and mood will help you understand your body’s relationship with this specific food. Try this experiment only if dairy foods are a regular part of your diet. Dairy foods include: all cow’s milk, yogurt, ice cream, and cheese by itself or on salads, sandwiches, pizza, pasta, macaroni and cheese, etc.

To get started, follow the 6-day program described below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Day</th>
<th>Meals</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Monday</td>
<td>Dairy with two meals</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tuesday</td>
<td>Dairy with two meals</td>
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<tr>
<td>Wednesday</td>
<td>Dairy with two meals</td>
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<tr>
<td>Thursday</td>
<td>No dairy. One side of salad</td>
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<td></td>
<td>or cooked greens (e.g.,</td>
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<td></td>
<td>spinach, broccoli, collard</td>
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<td></td>
<td>greens)</td>
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<td>Friday</td>
<td>No dairy. One side of salad</td>
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<td></td>
<td>or cooked greens (e.g.,</td>
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<td></td>
<td>spinach, broccoli, collard</td>
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<td>greens)</td>
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<td>Saturday</td>
<td>No dairy. One side of salad</td>
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<td></td>
<td>or cooked greens (e.g.,</td>
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<td></td>
<td>spinach, broccoli, collard</td>
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<td></td>
<td>greens)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sunday</td>
<td>Dairy again with one meal</td>
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After eating, make notes (see chart below) on how those foods made you feel throughout the day: Overly full? Abdominal bloating? Sore or sensitive breast tissue? Heavy, sinking sensation? How was your mood—light, upbeat, cranky, irritable? Did you have more or less energy than usual? Make note of any other sensations that you may feel throughout your experiment, using the chart below as a guideline.
## Dairy Experiment Tracking

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>What I ate</th>
<th>How I felt right after each meal</th>
<th>How I felt 2 hours after each meal</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Monday – dairy</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tuesday – dairy</td>
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<td>Wednesday – dairy</td>
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<td>Saturday</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sunday - dairy</td>
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By doing the Dairy Experiment, you may discover that your physical, mental and emotional experience varies widely depending on the food you eat. It may also help you identify whether your digestive tract and your liver can handle this particular food, and what the impact on your menstrual cycle may be.
Interview with the Inner Critic

1. What’s your most famous saying?

2. What event brought you into ____________’s life?

3. What is your job like? What do you do all day?

4. Who should __________ be more like? Why?

5. How do you think __________ would get on without you?
Identifying patterns that hold you back

My List of ‘Shoulds’

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What Makes Me Mad and My “stuff-it-down” reaction

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Feminine/Masculine Energy Balance

Every person has masculine and feminine energy within himself or herself. This feminine/masculine spectrum is a way of describing two sets of behaviors and attitudes that everyone is capable of—but each set traditionally has been ascribed either to men or to women. Both kinds of energy are powerful tools for shaping our lives, especially when used in balance. However, many of us get out of balance by focusing on or valuing only one set over the other.

Feminine Energy
1. Effortlessly attracting what you want
2. Holding the space for projects to develop at their natural pace
3. Creating and enjoying a process
4. Seeing the big picture; multi-tasking on many aspects of life
5. Working with others; creating community
6. Connecting to emotional life as a catalyst for change and development
7. Relating by listening, sharing, and nurturing

Masculine Energy
1. Tenaciously pursuing what you want
2. Deciding when/where/how a project grows
3. Finding the right solution
4. Focusing; “one thing at a time”
5. Relying on and trusting oneself; individual achievement
6. Setting boundaries around emotions in order to accomplish goals
7. Relating through camaraderie, entertainment, and problem-solving

Men’s Imbalances
Our productivity-focused society favors and rewards the use of masculine energy. Unfortunately, in order to become “men” boys in our culture learn early to quash their feminine energy and behaviors. Some consequences are:
- Significant disconnection from their own emotions and body sensations.
- Sense of self-worth located outside of themselves—based on material success in the world and the opinions of other men.
- Difficulty giving and receiving nurturance and intimacy—sex largely used for this purpose.
- Fewer verbal skills for deep relationships with friends, family, partners.
Epidemic levels of male depression in America resulting from unexpressed emotions and unresolved childhood pain.

Women’s Imbalances
By observing the men in our lives, and our attitudes towards them, we begin to understand how women also disown their feminine energy in an attempt to gain access to our society’s power structure that strongly favors men. This bias might look like:

Seeing men who are gentle and emotionally expressive as needy or whiney.

Being critical of men who focus on friendships or artistic pursuits instead of earning a lot of money.

Profound frustration with health problems related to your female anatomy, so that you are accessing only your masculine energy to get through the day.

Constantly imitating masculine behavior in order to gain access to financial or political power structures—so much so that it is difficult to access feminine energy when you need it.

A belief (conscious or unconscious) that masculinity really is better and that you are inferior; internalizing sexism and never giving yourself permission to draw on your feminine energy.

These experiences of disowning ourselves, and of disempowerment by others, can manifest as many of the menstrual and sexual health issues for which FLO Living clients seek help. Addressing emotional and energetic imbalances, as well as biochemical imbalances, is an important part of your healing process.
Feminine/Masculine Energy Balance

Quiz: Check Your Clock

For each time of day listed below, check off which approach is more like you, most of the time. If your approach always varies or is somewhere in between the two choices, check both boxes. When you have completed the questions, record your totals and review your answers to see which side of yourself you draw on—masculine or feminine—during which times of day. Are you balanced? Or do you lean strongly towards using only one kind of energy or the other?

8 am: the commute
- Masculine: You mentally review your goals for the day in your mind and plan out how you are going to get it all done.
- Feminine: You check in with yourself about how you are feeling and get an intuitive sense of how you are going to work best today.

10 am: successful project underway
- Masculine: You focus on your to-do list and take the next steps right away to keep up your momentum.
- Feminine: You reflect on the big picture, intuit what the project will need next, and feel trusting that it will come together.

12 pm: lunch break with friends
- Masculine: You don’t mind sharing what’s going on in your life or hearing their opinions but you rely on your own judgment about what’s best for you.
- Feminine: You love getting support from friends and always take their advice about your work or relationship issues.

3 pm: mid-day phone call from a stressed-out family member
- Masculine: You give them a piece of advice, offer to call them later, and get off the phone.
- Feminine: You listen and empathize and find a nice way to get off the phone twenty minutes later.

5 pm: end of the day—almost!
- Masculine: You feel tired but decide to push through and stay focused so you can leave on time.
- Feminine: You feel tired and intuitively know that you will soon be cranky, so you take a 15-minute break to breathe and make tea, then plan to leave late.

6 pm: exercise
- Masculine: You select your workout based on your fitness goals for the month.
- Feminine: You select your workout based on how your body is feeling right now.
7 pm: dinner and dishing about your day with your partner
☐ Masculine: You want to talk about what you accomplished today and then crash in front of the TV.
☐ Feminine: You want to talk about how you are feeling and then cuddle and trade foot rubs.

10 pm: relaxing and getting ready for sleep
☐ Masculine: You quiet your mind by organizing the house and making the next day’s to-do list so you can have a focused start tomorrow.
☐ Feminine: You quiet your mind by meditating and trusting that tomorrow will unfold as it should.

Totals: Masculine _________ Feminine ____________