



As if the fast-paced, hectic and sometimes chaotic society in which we live is not enough, add the traumas associated with a global pandemic and you have a situation that can seriously threaten a person's physical, emotional, economic, and spiritual well-being. The need for self-care becomes vital to successfully navigating through the complex challenges we are currently facing. We cannot afford to put self-care on the back burner. This is a travel Blog and travel has always been seen as a therapeutic with significant psychological benefits. In fact, pre-pandemic, Wellness Tourism was already trending high and growing at twice the rate of general tourism because people are more focused on their needs. In the face of COVID-19, the ability to freely travel, for whatever reason, has been deeply diminished. For those who rely on travel as a form of self-care and as a way to break from the built-up stress of home and work, the reality is that for the time being, travel is less of a viable option. For now, people are looking to the "Staycation," a vacation type that became popular about ten years ago during a significant economic downturn, to satisfy their desire to travel. Combine the need for wellbeing with the idea of a staycation, you come up with a concept Linden Schaffer calls "Wander Home."

In episode four of the Traveltude Podcast, Linden Schaffer was my guest. She is the founder and CEO of Pravassa and the architect of "Wander Home," a transformative series that allows one to explore expertly curated programs in mindfulness, movement, and nourishment- all without having to travel far. A "Wander Home" staycation brings the experts directly to you in a virtual setting consisting of digital classes, curated recipes, meal delivery and more, to give you the tools to expand, evolve, and completely reset. The Wander Home series currently offers three modalities: Ground In, Interdependence, and Radical Love (launching on December 8, 2020). You can learn more about Wander Home and start your personal journey by visiting www.Pravassa.com/wanderhome or connect socially via @Pravassa.

I was so inspired by what I heard from Linden that I decided to feed my longing for travel and desire for lifestyle changes by embarking on the Ground In series of Wander Home. I have selected the Boutique package which is a 48-hour exploration to finding the path to inner transformation with foundational programs in meditation, movement, beauty, and sleep. The itinerary walks me through a specifically curated series of recorded videos, chef-designed recipes, and written tutorials for a blissful and restorative staycation at home.

Ground In: A 2-Day Journey to Self-care and Rejuvenation

The Prep

Shopping for Essentials and Ingredients- With my list in hand, I set off to gather my essentials and ingredients. What's not to love about the organic, colorful, refreshing feel of the produce and spice sections of your local food market.



Creating My Space- This should have been an easy task, but it was a challenge to find a place in my 3 story, 3,200 sq. ft. row home that I could dedicate for this program. While no one visiting our home would describe it as cluttered or would perceive us as hoarders, it is true that we fully utilize all our space. After considering several different options, I decided to do a small redesign of the space in which I normally find solace- my bedroom. The décor is simple and incorporates the things that are meaningful and essential parts of my existence: God. Family. Community. Vacation.



Day 1

Set an Intention. What do I hope to gain? Let go of? Break through?

Good Morning: Grounding Meditation

- 5:00 am: Early morning is my FAVORITE time of the day- Quiet and Tranquility set the tone for the awakening of a new day and all the possibilities that await. The Grounding meditation was a nice way to start the day. Grounding is a meditative process that helps balance the body's energy field to decrease stress, anxiety, depression, and inflammation in the body. It is a daily routine for mental, emotional and spiritual health. Prior to beginning the meditation, I had my normal early morning prayer and devotions. Keeping with the wellness theme, I began a 5-day devotional called "Wellness Through Christ." Today's devotion is called "Fullness of Joy" Psalm 16:11.
- 7:30 am: Morning Anti-inflammatory Smoothie- I really enjoyed this smoothie. Turmeric was one of the many rich ingredients. Turmeric is known to help the body adapt to stress. That's a good thing because being a travel agent during this day in time can surely be stressful. Along with my smoothie, I had a cup of pistachios. Helped me feel full.
- 8:30 am: AM Yoga Flow- The 60-minute digital lesson in Kula Flow, which is a slow vinyasa based sequence, is steeped in alignment, anatomy, and breath. The exercise is intended to leave you feeling strong, grounded, sturdy and connected to your physical and energetic self. This is new for me. I may have taken two or three yoga lessons in my life. I liked the flow, but I need more time to work up to a full 60-minute routine. The part I did was challenging, but I'll be back at it tomorrow.

Good Day: Spend the day excavating within

- 10:00 am: Guided Writing- This exercise, and it was an exercise in every sense of the word, blends meditation, yoga, and writing in a way that participants can (re)connect with the body and put their writing out into the world. The exercise began with a mini grounding practice. The yoga for writers sequence was followed by a writing prompt. Journaling is not something that I do very often, but I liked the writing prompt. I found myself writing beyond the allotted time as I became emersed in freely allowing my thoughts to flow from my mind to the pen to the paper.
- 12:00 pm: Lunch- Warm Wild Mushroom and Kale Salad. This salad was EVERYTHING. I loved it. The salad is full of vitamin C and K and supports a healthy immune system. I was a little hesitant about the jalapenos, but when I tell you the salad was amazing- believe it!
- 1:30 pm: Silent Walking Meditation- The concept of bridging the external landscape with our internal landscape through the power of music. The presence you find in a sitting meditation is brought out into the world. A silent walk really appealed to me because I love to take walks and I often do so with no music- just walking. Silent meditation walking was a bit different, however, because it was a narrated guided meditation with music. I live in an urban community so when I normally take a silent walk, the silence is within. There is lots of activity and external sound all around me. For this meditation, I definitely needed to change

my normal walking environment to a park or hiking path with a landscape that was externally quiet, surrounded by trees and nature. Tomorrow, I'll be headed to the park.

Good Evening: Time to start slowing down the body and focusing on self-care

- 2:00 - 5:00 pm: Self Care Relation- This was my time to relax and nurture my soul in whatever way I chose to do it. I chose a massage. I reached into my little bag of gift cards that I have been saving for just the right time. The time is now for Massage Envy. When I am on an away vacation, a massage is part of the experience. It only seems fitting that I would have a massage as part of my staycation.
- 5:30 pm: Dinner- Root Vegetable Soup- This is a healthy nutrient rich soup that is full of antioxidant ingredients. I didn't make the soup. I opted for a sensible nutritious dinner of baked chicken and vegetables. Tomorrow, I will have the soup.
- 7:30 pm: Restorative Yoga- The yoga postures are designed to help you let go of the day and any underlying chronic stress and prepare you for a deep regenerative night's sleep. Honestly speaking, by this time I was pretty much yoga'd out for the day, however, for someone who has erratic sleep patterns, I felt like this would not be an exercise I would want to skip. Looking forward to a great night's sleep.

Good Night: Creating a realistic sleep hygiene routine

- 8:30 pm: Night Night Mylk- A warming nut mylk with flavorful spices that collectively promote reduced cortisol levels which leads to a better night's sleep.
- 9:30 pm: Nighttime Skin Care- A six step (or 2 steps if you're in a rush or pressed for time) routine that further enhances the beautifying effects of quality sleep. I don't need convincing when it comes to skin care. I have a pretty consistent routine. I did learn from this session that using a jade roller will be helpful in combating my tendency to clench my jaw. I will be trying it. So, with cleanser, toner, moisturizer, face mask, and face oil on hand, I completed the routine and felt ready for a good night's sleep.
- 10:00 pm: Sound Healing- The use of sound to relax the body and calm the mind. I found this relaxation method enjoyable.



Day 2

Building Upon Self and Expanding Within. Repetition is Key.

Good Morning: Grounding Meditation

- 5:30 am: Arising from a great night's sleep to the quiet and tranquility of another new day that will set the tone for all the possibilities that await. I began the day with a devotion called "God's Pouring Love" Is. 44:3-5 followed by the grounding meditation.
- 7:30 am: Morning Anti-inflammatory Smoothie- I totally did not mind having this smoothie for breakfast again this morning. I like it that much. I again had a cup of pistachios along with my smoothie.
- 8:30 am: AM Yoga Flow- Feeling up to the challenge, I began the 60-minute yoga flow routine. Today, I completed 45 minutes. Progress!

Good Day: Spend the day excavating within

- 10:00 am: Guided Writing- I completed the yoga for writers sequence and journaled for ten minutes based on a second writing prompt. As I begin to develop a wellness routine, journaling is a practice that I plan to incorporate a couple times a week.
- 12:00 pm: Lunch- I have actually been looking forward to having the Warm Wild Mushroom and Kale Salad for lunch again today. I added a piece of salmon. OMG- Delish!
- 1:30 pm: Silent Walking Meditation- So today I went to a park in my neighborhood to follow the walking meditation. Much different this time. More reflection. More connected.

Good Evening: Time to start slowing down the body and focusing on self-care

- 2:00 - 5:00 pm: Today, I chose to use my time to relax and nurture my soul in a soothing bubble bath. I seldom take advantage of the sanctuaries I have in my own home. I need to fix that.
- 5:30 pm: Dinner: I made the soup! I think I was a little hesitant about the Root Vegetable soup because the recipe included yams and I don't eat yams. Nevertheless, I prepared the soup. I was pleasantly surprised. The soup was very tasty. See what can happen when you keep an open mind.
- 7:30 pm: Restorative Yoga- The yoga postures are designed to help you let go of the day and any underlying chronic stress and prepare you for a deep regenerative night's sleep.

Good Night: Creating a realistic sleep hygiene routine

8:30 pm: Night Night Mylk- A warming nut mylk with flavorful spices that collectively promote reduced cortisol levels which leads to a better night's sleep.

9:30 pm: Nighttime Skin Care- I enjoyed another skin care regiment that included a cleanser and moisturizer.

10:00 pm: Sound Healing- The use of sound to relax the body and calm the mind.



Wander Home is just what I needed. The Ground In wellness program serves as a foundation for personal well-being. The structured, step-by-step itinerary worked wonderfully for me. It kept me focused yet free to wander. Almost immediately, I realized how easy it is to utilize the things readily available to me to create an environment that promotes wellness. One example is the space I created and dedicated as my quiet place. There was nothing especially unique about the space, but it became a place to mentally close off and bring my mind, body and spirit into alignment. When I emerged from the morning routine, I felt exhilarated and energized. Although I felt like this program was a little heavy on the yoga activities, I appreciate the importance of the exercises to maintaining the mental, physical, and spiritual connection throughout the entire day. The journey to wellness and self-care has many paths. With Wander Home, I was able to explore some of those paths. I finished the 2-day program inspired to make changes in my behavior that will promote a lifestyle of overall health and wellbeing.