

RESILIENCE RE-BOOT



Re-set your resilience

You've done well to get through the past few months, but how many of you are starting to struggle a bit? Most of us thought the situation with the c-virus would be a couple of months and then we would get back to 'normal'.

At the start of the first lockdown, you may have been one of the people able to find a groove and get straight into the new way of being at home. You set up your new desk space, signed up for a yoga app, worked out with Joe Wicks each morning, re-discovered your local parks and did the DIY you had never quite got around to over the years.

Equally you may have gone into proper rabbit in the head lights shock and denial mode. Scrambling along with homeschooling kids, new technology, feeling like you were always behind the curve and short of two hours in the day.

If you can be anything, be kind. And that includes being kind to yourself.

It's time to take stock of the past few months and extract the best of what you've learned. For the other stuff that's not been helpful or supportive to you, acknowledge it, give a gracious nod to it, say goodbye and start planning for the next few months.

Planning for the next few months

Take note! Write the next steps if you can, in your own handwriting. There is something more present and committed about the ownership of seeing your own handwriting as well as feeling the physical activity of writing. Get a pen and some paper or treat yourself to a new journal. Alternatively, use your computer, but in a different font from the one you use daily. Go and sit somewhere away from your desk.

You are going to take notes and set goals and actions to re-orientate yourself positively for the next few months.

Goals

- ✦ What or whom would you like to acknowledge from the last year and say thank you to?
- ✦ What would you like to let go of e.g. what has happened, what have you said or done or what has been said or done to you? Take a deep breath in and out, nod and say goodbye to it now.
- ✦ What's your purpose for next year? Consider your health, your family, your role in your community, at work or with neighbours, your spirit and what matters to you.
- ✦ Dare to dream... You're more likely to regret the ambitions you didn't go for when you had the chance, compared to feeling good about the hopes and ambitions you decided to have a go at regardless of the outcomes.

Get more energy each day

1. **What goal could you set today** that would bring your purpose to life? Do not let fear of failure stop you from setting out ambitions for the day, because tomorrow there is always another today. It could be one bigger goal or a series of smaller goals. If you choose more than

one, start with the easiest to give yourself some encouragement.

2. **Plan what you will eat for the next 7 days.** Choose food that has a mixture of colours on your plate as an easy guide to getting the right nutrition. Spend an evening looking up some healthy recipes either on line or in magazines, write down the ingredients or photograph them on your phone ready for shopping on line or at the supermarket. Try BBC good food for free recipes <https://www.bbcgoodfood.com/recipes>.
3. **When you're out, buy some healthy snacks** — oranges and apples are easy to keep fresh and cutting them up into slices means you have something to 'pick at' if you're a compulsive snacker. Nuts are good too... make sure the nuts are 'natural'. Unfortunately, as tasty as dry roasted caramel-salt coated nuts are, they are laden in calories. If they are your favourites, keep them for real super treat moments!
4. **Let's talk about tea and coffee.** It's estimated that 76% of the world drink tea or coffee each day. In moderation, each has health benefits, containing antioxidants helping to boost energy, and according to some studies may help prevent strokes. <https://www.healthline.com/nutrition/coffee-vs-tea#bottom-line>. However in excess, they can disrupt your sleep, keeping you too alert or have you waking up in the middle of the night. According to the Royal College of Psychiatrists you should stop drinking tea or coffee by the afternoon and replace your evening coffee with a herbal or milky non caffeine drink. Go easy on alcohol too by having no alcohol days.

5. **Plan your physical activity for the week.** Commit to one hour a day. For some of you, the thought of it will give you shivers! The hour does not have to be completed in one go. Split it up during the day. Also, if you have a very hard session, you can take a rest day or do more gentle exercise. It is good to work different muscle groups to keep your body and mind guessing what's next rather than coasting or feeling bored. The UK NHS recommend 150 minutes of moderate activity a week, or 75 minutes of vigorous activity, as well as strengthening activities for major muscles two days a week. Their website has links to free apps you can try out <https://www.nhs.uk/live-well/exercise/>. Take advice from your GP if you're unsure or have any medical conditions. Exercise can include doing house work, or walking the kids to school but at a faster pace than you would normally do, running up the stairs at home or work, or finding a walk outside that includes some slight inclines. According to the authors of 'Younger Next Year' we need to do something each day that gets us out of breath. Let your imagination work on that one! <https://www.youngernextyear.com/books/>.
6. **Being outside boosts your vitamin D levels.** Lack of vitamin D can reduce your immunity and make you feel very tired. Shorter winter days with lack of sunlight don't help. Plan to get out as the sun comes up or before it goes down each day and grab some midday sunshine if you know you are going to be at your desk all day. Noticing colours and smells while you're outside will help your mind to relax. There's a lot of research to say we work better and are more creative after a break, so plan it in!
7. **Stand up at the end of each meeting or call.** We would normally do that face to face and the digital world means we go from meeting to meeting without moving. Just standing up will help to shift your energy and change your mood. Taking a few deep breaths in and out, and even better, taking a few steps forwards and backwards in a rowing motion with your arms will help to release your shoulders which is an area of tension that can lead to bad posture and headaches. The Strozzi Institute has recorded a number of seminars sharing the latest thinking and exercises on this. Here is one of them <https://youtu.be/AKdIG5ShUes>
8. **Power nap!** Feeling tired or lacking in energy? Listen to your body. Do you need to step outside and get some fresh air or go and lie down. Don't feel guilty. This is probably the best advantage of working from home! Your power nap can be anything from 10-30 minutes. According to sleep.org the benefits can include:-
 - Improved mood
 - Improved cognitive abilities, such as short-term memory recall
 - Reduced lethargy and fatigue
 - Lowered blood pressure.
9. **Be kind to yourself.** We often allow other people more time and space to just 'be' than we do ourselves. Plan in your 'me time' between meetings and make sure you do stop working. N.B. Checking emails does NOT constitute stopping! At the end of the day look at what you have achieved, tidy your desk, put away your work and go and 'be'.

Wishing you happiness and good health for 2021.