

50 TIPS FOR

self-care

A guide to help you reduce stress, prevent burnout and build a harmonised lifestyle. Designed with micro habit building in mind.

What's most important is that you're intuitively using the tools and doing an activity to support you, for as little as 5 minutes each day.

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COACHING

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Hello

You may have followed my self-care series on Instagram at the beginning of 2020, where I posted the following daily prompts. I wanted to provide individuals free tips for practicing self-care activities and gain agency over their lifestyles. I began sharing tips prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, progressing into social distancing measures and lockdown. I never foresaw how valuable people would find the tips during such unprecedented times. And so, I decided to bring all of the tips back by popular demand!

You can only access them here and you now have free access to the prompts forever, accessible digitally from anywhere. Enjoy using the tips as a guide, a 50 day challenge or a daily prompt card, in whatever order suits you! Some tips are repeated for the purpose of building consistency and explanations are provided on the corresponding pages.

Leo
xo

#1 Grounding

#1 - Uncertainty is a part of life, whether it's the environment, our finances, our living situation, our health or the future of those we love. What I have learnt from my time working as a wellbeing lead alongside my therapeutic work is that learning to tolerate uncertainty and maintaining acts of self-care will help you pull through. It will help you to build self-awareness and resilience.

We're starting together with an essential tip, for if you're feeling stressed, worried or fearful about what the future has in store. For the most part, we only ever have control over our own actions to some degree. So if your worries are spiralling into scenes of a zombie apocalypse or bankruptcy, try this simple grounding technique to be more present in the moment. It won't solve all your problems but **focusing on your senses** will give you a chance to be in a better space for action and decision making.

Focus on:

5 things you can see,
4 things you can touch,
3 things you can hear,
2 things you can smell,
1 thing you can taste.

#2 Implement &
stick to a routine

#2 - Just for today, let's focus on building a solid routine. Whether you are commuting for work, working from home, job searching, caring for others, home schooling or retired, try to maintain structure in your day! It's extremely beneficial to keep to your usual routine, to re-establish or curate a better one.

1 Spend 10 minutes the night before or morning of, taking note of the activities you need and want to do and plan out your day or week! Don't use this task as a means to procrastinate, after you have a method that works for you, (phone calendar, email tasks, handwritten timetable e.g.,) it should not take longer than 30 minutes to update weekly or 5 minutes daily.

2 Stick to the times: If you usually wake up at 6.00 for specific commitments, you should try to continue to do so, even on down days. If you're working from home, fill your commute time with another activity. Eat at the same times and check in with colleagues or friends when you can!

3 If you are in isolation with someone else also try to maintain time apart, irritability due to proximity can be prevented, which is covered in more detail in tip 5.

4 Make time for activities that bring you joy or help you to relax. They do not need to be expensive or elaborate, just things that make you feel good and help to improve your mood.

You may be facing unemployment or financial losses. As hard as it may be, ensure you **maintain some continuity in your day** and use your time for applying for jobs at home or your local library.

#3 Quality time
with loved ones

#3 - Today's tip is all about spending quality time with family or friends. This may look different when maintaining long-distance relationships, whilst shielding or socially distancing. Think about how you want to stay connected with those you care about, put a meet-up or activity in your diary and [reach out to people](#).

Many of us have loved ones living overseas or out of city and so maintaining distanced relationships may not be new for you. If you have access to WiFi or have a good data plan schedule a video-call with friends and family members. It's essentially free and provides instant contact with those around us! Over the months of 2020, I've had virtual catch-ups with friends and family over a hot drink from the comfort of my sofa!

Get creative with socials! I've signed up to some great Apps that allow you to connect to multiple people at a time. I've had FaceTime happy-hour hangouts, movie nights, quizzes and had a great time 'attending' live raves and events, all via the net.

Meet with loved ones to do activities outside; walk, have a picnic or grab a hot drink with a friend, peer or member of your family.

#4 Rest, relax, restore

#4 - Today the focus is on slowing down, which is a core component of self-care. Although it's necessary for our basic functioning, most of us find resting difficult. I go into detail about why this may be the case for you in my Self-Care Manual which will be available for purchase in 2021. If you want to prevent stress related to being busy or burnout, to feel genuinely rested and energised, try out these simple but effective tips regularly, you can thank me later.

1 Put your phone down. I've had so many clients say that they find it difficult to focus or enjoy activities. And I have to say, it's not always because of low mood or a busy schedule, it can be because you're distracted or trying to multitask, which is near impossible for our minds. If you want to read or tune into your favourite series, then get off your phone and focus on just that. Csikszentmihaly's theory of reaching a state of **flow, can only be achieved if we are truly consumed by what we are doing**. So schedule time to do nothing mindfully or devote your time to one thing at a time.

2 Practice activities that are passive. In order for our bodies to really relax on a physiological level we need to teach our bodies what it feels like to have less adrenaline pumping through it. Doing relaxing activities with limited or slow movements will allow not only your body but also your mind to experience true relaxation.

3 Our environments and even looking at different colours can stimulate stress responses in us. So another tip is to consider how your environment might be impacting your ability to rest. It could be as simple as being around nature or decluttering at home. Whilst it would be nice, we don't have to be on top of a mountain meditating for hours in order to achieve a restful state as we all find peace from within. Experiment with visuals, clothes, music or scents to help you feel relaxed.

Schedule relaxing activities into your diary at least once a week and stick to doing them in order to switch off and find some Zen!

#5 Get work done whilst
co-habiting & caring

#5 - Today's tips are specifically for those indoors for a majority of the day in flat shares or with family, this was particularly relative during isolation and lockdown periods but is for anyone who is trying to navigate working from home and not feeling they have the space or privacy from others. For many of us living in the city, in relatively small spaces with a partner, parents, children or peers, this can add a layer of complexity, where a lack of personal space may test you and your loved ones. So, here are some tips for navigating your shared working or studying and living space.

1 Create designated spaces around the room or between 2 rooms so there is more physical space between you and others in the house. If you are working from home at the same time as another person, be mindful of noise and client confidentiality. Consider buying a room divider to create space and help block sound, as well as WiFi boosters to increase broadband range in the house.

2 Organise non-negotiable time for work meetings and client work where you're not interrupted. It might help to arrange your working timetable with any other working adults you live with. You may not be able to afford all-day care for those who may be dependant on you, so try to structure two or three hours of the day for work based tasks and consider hiring a nanny or private care services for those specific times instead.

3 If school's out for you, keep the kids occupied with school activity packs and e-learning games. For children under 5 or caring for older adults trying to supervise will prove difficult if your attention needs to be elsewhere. If finances are limited contact your local council, community mutual aid or set up a social bubble, to share caring responsibilities with family, friends or others that you trust.

4 If you want to take breaks from your laptop with those living with you, do it! If you'd prefer to get a 10 minute walk in, do it! See what helps to keep you energised, that's what breaks are for!

5 Talk to your employer or clients to review expectations and how you are managing. We can't expect our output to be the same under constant change or unstable circumstances. **Be adaptive.**

I hope these were all helpful tips for getting work done from home whilst living or caring for others! Let me know how you got on with implementing any of these!

#6 Take your lunch break
and clock-out on time

#6 - When you're working from home and your work station is now in your living room or bedroom it's so much harder to move away! However being boundaried with your time is super important for self-care. And here are today's tips!

1 Plan when you'll begin work, take your breaks and end the day, before you even start. Base this on your usual working hours and don't work extra just because you're no longer factoring in commute times or you have extra tasks to do. **Whatever is not urgent can wait.**

2 Take your full lunch break, step away from your laptop and actually do something completely different. Never feel guilty for putting work on hold so that you can care for yourself for just 30 - 60 minutes whilst working.

3 At the end of the working day close your laptop and switch off. A lot of us like to carry on doing other activities on our laptops, as they have become an essential part of daily life and business. However, close all work related applications and do something else for at least an 30 minutes before going back to the screen.

4 Think of activities you can do during your breaks and after work has ended. Scheduling this will help motivate you to step away from your devices. Remember, rest is also an activity and for more on relaxation check-out #4 in the series.

Remember, when you overwork yourself and continually say yes to tasks, you could be saying no to other activities and yourself.

#7 Setup a positive
working environment

#7 - Today is all about ensuring that your environment helps to support how you're caring for yourself! Although this may primarily apply to work, you should consider your environment regardless of whether you work from home or not.

1 Ensure you're happy in your space, whether you're working from a desk or sitting on your sofa. When you look at your space, how does it make you feel? **You want your space to make you feel motivated** for your desired outcome, whether that be productivity, relaxation or fun. So what does that look like? Does your space need to be more comfortable? More or less colourful? Change it.

2 Is your space practical and are objects accessible? How easy is it for you to work how you're working? Plan what you'll need for each working day and place it out before you start working. If you want to get in more movement you could scatter things around the room or create small separate work stations around the house for different work activities and a change of scenery.

3 Your work environment also extends to you! What you wear may also impact your mood and productivity. Consider wearing a fresh set of lounge clothes or still dressing somewhat smart particularly if you're having video conferences with colleagues and clients. It's all self-care and it really does make a difference to how you move through your day! Changing clothes is a transition in itself.

4 Your environment also relates to how well you work remotely in a team, so ensure you are communicating changes and tasks completed with your team or clients via email, message or a digital workspace.

#8 Keep active

#8

1 Plan your physical activity for the day and keep a routine of some sort. This could vary in duration, frequency and type of activity. It could be 15 minutes of the same thing daily or 45 minutes of different activities every other day.

2 Passive activities are covered in tip #4, so take a look. One of the things I want to emphasise is that **all movement is exercise**. Change your perception about what you should be doing to keep fit. YouTube and online PT's can be great in helping you to maintain activity but don't underestimate the power of walking, dancing around the house, cleaning and carrying shopping bags. Break your activities up. As a Reiki practitioner, I follow 5 precepts daily and they all start with 'just for today'. This for me has become a mantra in itself and before starting any activity or workout I always state this. I do this to motivate myself to start because starting stuff can be difficult and by the time I have I'll usually do it for far longer than I initially set-out.

3 Pace yourself! Everyone has a sweet spot when it comes to physical activity and you may be familiar with this if you have a long-term health condition or had physiotherapy for an injury. Do too little and you may experience stiffness, pain and tension because you're sedentary, but do too much and you may be out of the game for a few days. In CBT we call this perpetual cycle boom and bust. So, it's best to maintain balance when being active in order to be productive everyday. Find your sweet spot by keeping a diary of your maximum times spent doing an activity and testing out some averages.

4 There are loads of free home workout videos on the net and during the lockdown those who didn't have uncompromised immune systems were still able to walk outside once a day, so utilise any opportunities. You can try out desk exercises and stand instead of sit at your laptop as well as carry out chores or use household or food items in workouts!

#9 Make a meal
you love

#9 - I am certain that a large part of our personal lives are centred around food, for me it is anyway. So with this in mind, how much of what you are eating do you truly love? Here are some tips to get you really enjoying your food and consciously eating and snacking!

1 Spend some time planing a few of your favourite meals and trust me, it does not have to be elaborate or come from a cookbook, but if it does that's great too! Set a date to buy the stuff. Remember to support your local businesses and be resourceful. Once a month I make a meal with leftovers to minimise waste and I batch cook two main meals every week, which not only saves money, it also saves time cooking each night.

2 Get creative. When you're cooking try things you've never done before. I used to always cook the same out of fear I would ruin the meal and have waste, but I have to tell you, it's never been that bad that I haven't been able to eat it.

3 Eat mindfully to really enjoy the meal, including when eating with someone else. Really get engrossed in sharing quality time whilst dining. Bon appétit!

We all have a complex relationship with food, even if on the surface we engage in healthy eating behaviours. Spend some time planning a healthy meal. Healthy eating means different things to different people. For me it means variety and nutrition for my gut. For those with intolerances and gut related diseases, eating for your gut health is paramount. You may be surprised to know that your gut and physical body hold strong connections with your mental wellbeing and they influence one another. Be mindful about this when you're feeling low or overwhelmed by the demands of your life. [What do you reach for first and how does it make you feel?](#)

That's really it! Let me know what you have been trying out in the kitchen and share photos of your creations if you follow this tip today!

#10 Do one thing
you really enjoy

#10 - Writing this tip filled me with so much excitement because we all are so multifaceted and multipassionate. Sometimes to the point where we focus on such a variety of things that we spread ourselves thin or feel too stuck to start projects in the first place! So today I'm sharing with you some tips to just **seize the moment and do one thing which truly brings you joy** and helps to take care of you!

1 Put pen to paper and list all of the things you love doing. Then highlight all of the activities you can do today or this week. Don't include things you need to do unless they are pleasurable! If all of your activities seem to be things you cannot do right now or today, think about what doing those activities give you and how they make you feel. Brainstorm other activities you could try that may provide you that same sense of pleasure that fits into your day.

2 Plan out how you're going to do it, what you'll need, with whom, if anyone and set a time to start. Scheduling your activity improves the likelihood of you doing it and getting others involved helps to hold you accountable.

3 Now do it! That's it. I hope you enjoy your activity today and find solitude where there is alone time or isolation.

#11 Sleep routine

#11 - This self-care tip is all about how to best regulate your sleep cycles and improve the quality of your sleep! I'm not going into depth about the stages of sleep, just providing some awesome tips you can try out now!

- 1 Bust the myths. It's normal to wake up several times a night and the average amount of sleep the typical body and mind needs is 7 hours! Our bodies can't actually 'catch-up' on sleep, so if you're jet-lagged or out of sync it's better to stay awake and go to bed at your usual time unless you've been awake for an unhealthy amount of time.
- 2 Go to bed and wake up at the same times daily, no matter the day. This helps with regulating your sleep cycles. Avoid napping if you want to get quality sleep during the night.
- 3 Whilst in isolation with others or having a small living space this may be difficult but try to make sure you limit the use of your bedroom to sleep and sex only. Don't do work or eat and watch movies in bed because your mind will associate those activities with those actions. So, get up and get out.
- 4 Stay active in the day. The easiest way to induce sleepiness is to physically tire your body out. Try not to exercise before bed because having adrenaline pumping around the body is not physiologically beneficial for getting into a resting state.
- 5 Get vitamin D. On a hormonal level, the body benefits from the sun as melatonin is produced which helps to regulate your sleep-wake cycle.
- 6 Avoid stimulants. We rarely class what we eat and drink as stimulants but caffeine, alcohol and sugar are things we should reduce earlier in the day if we want to sleep well. Some experts say your last coffee should be at midday but if you're an avid caffeine drinker the common guidelines is 4-6 hours before bed. Limit eating 2 hours before sleep.

#12 Affirm your
positive qualities

#12 - Affirming your positive qualities is actually two tips in one; stating your positive qualities as a truth to yourself and accepting them.

1 In order to do this you need to be aware of your positive qualities and in good CBT style you should write your positive attributes down! If you keep diaries or journal this may come naturally to you.

2 Track your positive qualities by reflecting on the acts you have done for yourself or others in the past.

3. Write them down and have them on view in your living space or keep photos and notes on your phone.

3 Declare these qualities to yourself frequently. This not only provides us a sense of emotional encouragement but it can help to challenge some of the unhelpful thoughts and self-limiting beliefs we may experience daily.

Positive affirmations help to reduce stress and increase motivation to get things done, for example “I have overcome something like this before and I can overcome this now”. You could also try saying some positive affirmations related to self care, “I love myself, I am worthy of taking care of myself”. Declare and affirm your positive qualities at least once every day, in the morning or before you go to bed.

#13 Don't run away
with your worries

#13 - I want you to take some time today on this ever relevant tip, to minimise any anxieties or worries! Now for the most part, anxiety does have a positive function and fear is not to be feared! Anxiety can be helpful if it prompts us into action and it's our bodies way of keeping us safe, using our automatic fight, flight, freeze and fawn response system. Although, they may not feel super useful at times. When anxiety causes us to worry excessively or panic where there is no real threat, this is when it becomes helpful to manage it.

Select a time today to take 5 minutes to write all your worries on a scrap piece of paper (not before bed), sit with them for a further 10 minutes and ask yourself the following:

- 1 How much will this matter to me in 1 years time?
- 2 What would I say to a friend having this worry?
- 3 Is this worry based on real life or am I catastrophising?
- 4 What's the worst case scenario and can I problem solve it now?

Once you've worked through these throw that paper in the bin or delete the note and see if that helps to reduce the severity of your worrying moving forward. Practicing this technique daily and returning to an activity in the present moment is terrific for reducing worry and CBT practitioners call it Worry Time. It's best to keep a daily list you can focus on in your scheduled worry time and then throw the list away after your scheduled worry session.

Give postponing your worries a try and let me know how it goes!

#14 Revisit grounding

#14 - If you're following this series in order daily, then you're already 2 weeks into improving self-care! If you feel you would benefit from a personalised coaching approach, just drop me an email! You may not be following in chronological order, and that's okay too. Today is all about taking time to revisit grounding. Improving present moment focus will help improve the attention element of mindfulness, as well as help you to relax both your body and mind.

This is an exercise I do with clients in my low intensity CBT-based work and it's all about tuning into the nature surrounding you. I often find clients saying "I want to learn to clear my mind", but actually there's no such thing. We can't control how we interpret our surroundings or the thoughts that pass through our minds, but we can practice refocusing techniques to direct our attention towards or away from particular senses.

Now, open a window or stand outside and try to focus on one of the following for 5 minutes, set a timer on your phone so that you're not clock watching.

- 1 Listen to the birds chirping.
- 2 Listen to passing traffic.
- 3 Focus on the movement of a tree.
- 4 Attempt to count the leaves or branches of a tree.
- 5 Allow your gaze to follow the birds or planes in the sky.

Every time your mind wanders, try to refocus, refocus again, and again, and again. Practice may not make perfect, but it does make better than last time.

#15 Amend plans for
current circumstances

#15 - Another day, another tip in the self-care series! D'you know what? If we're lucky in life, we're in this for the long-haul. And if we're going to be honest with ourselves, world events like natural disasters and pandemics will forever be a part our lives after they occur. I don't say this to dampen spirits. I say this because a large part of building optimism and looking after ourselves is centred on acceptance and not avoiding the reality of adverse or difficult situations. This links quite nicely with routine scheduling, facing up to fears using worry work and grounding too!

With this in mind, what had you planned over the coming year or even month, what's happened in your life that threw a spanner in the plans? And how do your plans look now? At the time of writing this, I can tell you, I had coaching meetings set-up, further training for my therapeutic work, two city breaks and connecting with the people I love, a lot of 30th birthday's including my own as well as a lower electricity bill!

By force, many of these things are on hold, and that's okay. **This is a life lesson in adapting to change and accepting uncertainty.** Not much in life actually goes to plan. This tip serves as a reminder to use changing times to consider how adaptive we have been in the past, explore how resilient we are and reshape the visions we had for our weeks ahead and beyond.

- 1 Get a piece of paper and write down the plans you had this year.
- 2 Highlight all the things you can still do.
- 3 Revision your goals and milestones.
- 4 Break things down that will take longer and think of adaptations for the things you can no longer do.
- 5 Continue to live your life! The world has not stopped spinning yet.

#16 Go for a walk outside
& be around nature

#16 - This is a simple but super effective tip for not only practicing self-care but taking small breaks from stressful demands. Being around [nature feels therapeutic because we are living organisms](#), the elements ground us and no matter how many times our mood changes in alignment with the weather, we often forget this or don't quite perceive ourselves in this way. Nature brings us back to our baseline emotionally, mentally, spiritually and physically. I've always felt inspired to adapt teaching and therapy for outside working and it's one of the reasons I led walks in East London with Mental Health Mates for over a year and a half!

1 Before you start work today, take a walk. If you live near any grass or trees, use that space. I've covered taking breaks in tip #6 and setting your alarm for 30 minutes earlier may help fit a walk into an early start.

2 What I have found is that just after midday is when I need a break most and utilising this time helps to revitalise me! It's also a time in the day where some sunlight is guaranteed. Lunchtime walking is something I practice when I'm in the office, so it's something I'm continuing to do now! So, after you have eaten, get outside for the second time that day. One of the perks of walking after you eat is that you regulate your blood sugars too, two birds one stone?!

3 Consider a third walk outside of the house or as part of your commute home. Evening walks can be just as refreshing and help you to leave work at work as you transition into another part of your day, particularly if you work long hours.

4 It's also good to consider amendments. If you have a garden or balcony space, use that space, walk around, sit or simply stand for some fresh air.

#17 Check your thoughts

#17 - An activity for you to do today and moving forward consists of identifying your thoughts! Using CBT approaches, we encourage clients to identify their cognitions using diaries in order to evaluate their thinking styles. Our thoughts can be hard to catch because by the time we are an adult, how we think has very much become automotive and there's not a lot we can do about what pops into our minds.

Our thoughts have the ability to directly influence our emotions and behaviours and if negative or unhelpful thoughts go unnoticed they run the risk of dampening our moods as well as our motivation to engage in self-care, but they don't have to. **Your thoughts are not facts.** We can check and change this interaction so that we choose what we react to and how we show up!

1 Catch: Write your thoughts down over the day. If you're finding this difficult, think about why you're feeling how you are, what's happened over the past few hours or possibly any stressors and work backwards to evaluate the kinds of thoughts going through your mind.

These may be about the past or even hypothetical situations.

2 Check: What do you notice about not only the content of your thoughts but also the process and patterns? Are there common themes with certain situations or people? Evaluate how these thoughts have impacted your mood and actions. Write down how much you believe your thoughts.

3 Change: In order to challenge thoughts you need to write down statements that support and contradict each one and then create an alternative thought that is more realistic and balanced to the situation. Think about what you might say to a loved one sharing this with you or think about facts surrounding why this is not true based on previous events.

Example: "I am lazy," > support: "I laid on the sofa all day, I didn't cook" > opposition: "I cleaned the house and batch cooked yesterday, I worked all week, I am allowed to rest". > New alternative thought: "It was okay for me to have a chilled day today, rest is a necessary component to my wellbeing and I give myself permission to do so".

#18 Personal care
and hygiene

#18 - Hello, I purposely scheduled this tip two weeks in because people commonly think that self-care is only about self-indulgence and spa days but that's only one component of the work, and a nice one at that. Self-care is a spectrum of acts and personal care is just one part of what it means to care for ourselves. It is a vital attribute to caring for ourselves because practicing acts of self-compassion helps to cultivate self-worth and self-esteem.

- 1 Today sit down and brainstorm all the personal care items you have on your agenda, from nails to hair and consider focusing on purely pampering yourself today.
- 2 Buying products you need even if you don't intend to start yet are still steps to self-care.
- 3 Having a long bath instead of a shower, deep conditioning or oiling your hair, making a homemade scrub or putting on a £1 face mask whilst reading are all inexpensive ways you can look after yourself.
- 4 You can also plan how you want to spread self-care throughout your week. I exfoliate and cream my whole body daily, I have done pretty much all my life, so for me this was a routine act of self-care before I started to build a cleansing routine.

Spending time on yourself is not selfish. No matter what's going on around you, attending to your needs is essential. The more you support or give to others, the more you need to give to yourself. As the common saying goes, we cannot pour from an empty cup!

#19 Do one thing you've
been putting on hold

#19 - I think it's safe to say that when life throws us curveballs, our routines can become out of sync and most of us prefer to fill our time with activities instead of taking a breath or using the time reflectively. Shifts and demands in life can easily prompt us to fall into unhealthy habits too, so developing self-awareness can help us identify these triggers earlier on.

When you have more time on your hands, try not to fill all your time with loads of new stuff or beat yourself up about feeling stuck in not knowing how to use your time 'better' when free time does arise.

Today's self-care tip is all about prioritising tasks that have been abandoned or on the back-burner. It could very well be making banana bread or doing the latest TikTok (I have no idea), but it could also be things you never had time to complete before or you've been putting off because of avoidance.

- 1 Make a list of tasks.
- 2 Prioritise them by importance and urgency.
- 3 Allocate a specific day and time to do each task.
- 4 Boom. Done.

Okay, so it may not be as quick as a 4 second countdown but we tend to build things up in our minds so much that tasks tend to take less time than we actually anticipate. Try this out for today and beyond! All it takes is one day a month to organise necessary or routine activities. For me this looks like, sorting out my digital life, making time for back-ups, going through old photos and deleting the ones I no longer want. It's a mammoth task but I'm on it! What do you want to complete this week?

#20 Maintain Boundaries

#20 - This tip is often overlooked but it's such an important one! There is no self-care without boundaries! Let me repeat that, **there is NO self-care without boundaries**. Zero, zip, zilch, nada!

Boundaries come in a variety of capacities, I've mentioned them throughout without explicitly labelling them so. Boundaries can literally save lives, with social distancing measures for example, but I'm not talking about physical boundaries. I'm talking about the rules that you set in your relationships.

- 1 Check your communication style. There are 4 common forms of communication. Are there times when you are aggressive and inflexible when talking to others? On the other end of the spectrum are there times that you are passive and please everyone else by putting their needs above your own? Consequently, are you passive-aggressive because you feel resentful or find it difficult to communicate effectively? If you answered no to most of these you're probably already practicing assertive communication. We can all fall victim to unhelpful communication styles and they can be the difference between effectively setting boundaries and not setting any at all.
- 2 Say no. You know how to say the word but learning to use your voice when you need to and feeling comfortable to do so is powerful. This doesn't mean not considering others or saying no to everything. Saying no as a form of avoidance will only ever keep you feeling anxious, fearful or stuck. But saying no to protect your wellbeing or to say yes to yourself first is paramount to maintaining healthy boundaries and self-care.
- 3 Setting boundaries with loved ones can feel hard, especially when they have not been established before. Practice by writing down what you want to say and what the advantages and disadvantages are of having the desired conversation, a little like a cost-benefit analysis.
- 4 Be boundaried with your time. As I often say, **time is a the most precious thing we have** in this life. Set aside time for just you and make it non-negotiable. Practicing this also helps with time management and regulating stress.

So there you go, concrete fail-proof ways to be more assertive and boundaried in your personal and professional life. Don't be discouraged if people react surprised in response to your assertiveness or not like it at all, because it naturally creates changes in relational dynamics.

#21 Stay Hydrated

#21 - It's a really simple tip today because amongst change or stress it's easy to lose sight of the small things as well as our health. It might be that at the moment doing the bare minimum is all you can muster to get through the day.

I love water, it's my first choice anywhere, but I know not everyone shares my love for it and most find it hard to drink the recommended amount without having it with tea or coffee, even though we all know drinking water is essential and that the health benefits are huge! So here is some motivation for you to down more agua!

- 1 Drink a standard cup size of water every 1.5 hours.
- 2 Always have a cup or bottle with you.
- 3 Try a water drinking challenge.
- 4 Invest in a visually attractive eco-friendly bottle, evidence shows an increase in water consumption for those who have their own bottles. Some bottles are also time marked to help encourage us to drink more.
- 5 Infuse your water with fruit or vegetables instead of caffeine.

For more on taking it back to basics today:

- 1 Make your bed.
- 2 Brush your teeth and shower.
- 3 Eat at least 1 main meal.
- 4 Walk, even if that's around the house.
- 5 Drink more water.
- 6 Accept that life is different or challenging for whatever reason right now and don't beat yourself up about it.

Enjoy your day!

#22 Digital Detox

#22 - Today's self-care tip is all about digital detoxing. It's safe to say that most of us are addicted to our electronic devices particularly our phones. And if you're questioning whether you are, think about whether you carry your phone around the house with you, scroll on it whilst watching TV, double check for work emails when you have no intention of working, or check for updates on your social media platforms without even receiving a notification. Yup, I thought so! Whilst advances in technology are invaluable and the internet keeps the world connected, I do believe that our use of it all should be in moderation. Much like everything else in life. The reason that this is an important one for self-care is due to the amount of time we waste idle or distracted by our devices that we could be spending on the things we value as well as caring for ourselves.

1 Set boundaries with others on your phone. Dedicate times to check your phone as well as not be on there at all. Something I have practiced for many years is putting my phone on airplane mode after 22:30 and often leaving my phone with the WiFi and data off during the day. "Oh but what if something really important or bad happens and people can't get through to me?" Well if it's that important you're going to need sleep to deal with it in the morning, don't you think? I'm also sure people still call and text these days, which needs not connection to the internet at all.

2 Turn all notifications off or uninstall social media Apps from your phone. All of my social media Apps including WhatsApp have the notifications turned-off and if I don't want to check my phone I physically leave it on the other side of the room. There may be an important call you have to take or be available for family, in which exceptions can be made. All in all I've even seen cages for phones, so do what works for you to minimise distraction.

3 Don't use your phone at all whilst other tasks are scheduled, including when you're with others, unless it's a necessity. Sometimes we do need our phones for important stuff, on the go work meetings, following-up emails etc.,, but where not essential, ditch it. Whenever you have the opportunity to put it down, leave it there and just see how much more productive you are when completing work or connected you are when socialising.

4 Engage in an activity that does not involve your laptop, tablet, phone, gaming system or TV.

#23 Watch a
movie or series

#23 - Just for fun, I'm countering the last tip. Remember, everything in moderation. This self-care prompt is all about unwinding. No matter our differing lifestyles, sometimes it can really feel like groundhog day. No matter your situation allocate some time today to having a mental break from everything around you. **Switch off, by switching on!**

1 Pick a 3 hour block of time today just for watching a few episodes of your favourite series or a movie. This activity is worth ditching the digital detox for.

2 Stock up on snacks. This could be healthy snacks like fruits or vegetables, a bag of popcorn, your favourite crisp and dip, chocolate, sweets or your favourite drinks. Talking of drinks, are you even snacking if you don't have a KA, Rubicon or Supermalt?!

3 Make it a social. Start your chosen movie at the same time with family or friends. and try to watch along together, even if you cannot physically be together. Always improvise on quality time!

What film or programme do you plan to watch today and what time? At the time of me writing this, circa April 2020, I'm hooked on Killing Eve.

#24 Clean & Organise

#24 - Today is all about keeping our space clean and tidy to help foster a positive environment for wellbeing and self-care!

1 Let's start with cleaning your space. It can be a light clean or a deep clean, just don't underestimate the power of dusting and wiping down surfaces or hoovering and mopping. It will revitalise your space and get rid of unwanted dust, germs and bacteria.

2 Organise your items. Evaluate the things that really hold meaning in your life and get rid of what doesn't. Have a spring clear out and recycle, donate, re-gift and throw stuff out that you no longer need or want.

3 Tidy your space. We have all heard how productive making our bed can prompt us to be and whilst that psychological sense of accomplishment has a lot to do with it, I also think our beds are the largest focal point of our rooms. Regardless of your space, tidy the parts of your rooms that take up the most space, particularly if you don't want to clean or organise the whole room. This makes a huge impression overall.

4 [Arrange your space by use and intuition not aesthetics](#). I say this because we usually place objects using our eyes but we can get more use out of our space if we place things by how we move around our home and what we actually use. Reading books on feng shui and hygge will help you organise your space to benefit you on a physical as well as energetic level!

5 If you live alone break down the tasks but if you live with others, including children, use the help of others. Allocate each person to a room and you could be done with cleaning and organising general items within 30 minutes! That's no time at all but the benefits could last weeks!

#25 Journal

#25 - The things I love about journalling; it's creative, reflective and individually unique to you! You can create anything you want on paper and there are so many types of journals, notepads and diaries on the market! One of the things that lead me to coaching was actually my experience creating my own dialectic journal, which expanded into a professional venture; Tandem Notes.

What are journals and diaries good for? A LOT! [A journal is a lot like a coach](#), it mirrors back everything going on for you. If you track your needs or desires, your mood, level of activity or write down events, learning points you want to read back and reflect on, it can provide a wealth of insight and assist your personal growth. It documents the nuances of your lived experiences and serve as beautiful memories of the past, hopefully reminders for propelling your present and future. On a deeper lever it can provide you true self discovery. And themed diaries can also be insightful! I've made and kept dream journals since my teens!

When journalling, make it fun! Use colour, pens, highlighters and different materials and textured paper, you can stick using glue or paper clips. You can buy journals or create one from scratch and even bookbind it yourself! Journalling is best analogue; by hand but that's not to say that you cannot also play around with digital journals and diaries.

Use journal prompts widely available online! Whether it's mood or habit tracking, goals and aspirations, writing down what you did or learnt today, or focusing on self-care, self-compassion, positive qualities, values or gratitude. Focus on whatever you need in the now and go back to it at a later stage for reflection.

#26 Follow good news stories

#26 - This is very much in line with one of the suggestions that came through as a suggestion via Instagram. A lot of broadcasting and media reports have a negative focus, unfortunately it's a core component for contemporary news, print and TV journalism. Although we cannot change what's put out there, we can change how much of it we consume.

1 Follow good news platforms like Upworthy or Tank's Good News.

2 Be boundaried. Set times for news consumption. I hardly ever watch the evening news.

3 When watching the news remember to keep to the facts and not the sensationalised headlines. It's easy to be pulled in by buzzwords and negative terminology but they have next to nothing to do with the story and more to do with setting an agenda.

4 **Remind yourself of what's true for you.** All too often we are swamped with guilt or anxiety by the stories and images we see on the news. This is normal we are empathetic human beings who care about the state of the world. But ask yourself, 'is there anything I can do about this?' If the answer is yes, sure, give it a go but most of the time the answer is no and we need to get out of our minds and back into the present of our own lives. "What's real for me today is, I'm staying at home, I'm social distancing when I'm out, I need to do a few tasks around the house and I would like to talk to a friend today."

5 If the news prompts anxiety and panic within, this is a typical and common response. What's generally reported tends to be traumatic, globally. However, similarly to the above tip, if there's nothing you can do about the situation it is helpful to refocus on the present. Try out some of my grounding techniques (tips #1 and #14), stay connected to activities by doing things you enjoy at times when you know your mind will wonder and problem solve any practical worries that are affecting you.

#27 Have a long
shower or bath

#27 - Today's tip for self-care is simple but can be used as a mindfulness exercise to help with grounding and relaxation. To save on water you can buy shower heads with filters as well as run the bath hot to save re-heating. Having a shower or bath in the morning can help revitalise you for the day ahead and equally help to relax you an hour or so before bed. No matter the time, one should easily fit into your existing routine.

- 1 Take your shower or bath for at least 15 minutes.
- 2 Be like Goldilocks. Make sure the temperature is just right for you.
- 3 Have your favourite items to hand. This could be candles, bubble bath, shower gels, bath salts, a bath bomb, body scrub, treatment, spa essentials kit, face mask, hair mask or hair oils.
- 4 Do you want to add sound? Play relaxing music to change the ambience.
- 5 Stand under or sit in the water and just concentrate on the scents and sounds around you. Breathe. [Take the stillness in](#). Relax.

It's a simple but effective tip for today, enjoy!

#28 Find ways to
give to others

#28 - Today's all about finding ways to give to others and there are many ways we can! Self-care is all about making sure we give to ourselves but it doesn't stop there. When we have the opportunity we should think about the ways that we can serve our communities, particularly in times of need.

1 Monetary donations I'm sure is the first method that comes to mind for many. Donate to a charity, non-profit or cause. Use the platforms you have to share about local businesses or causes that matter to you and why you like them, to increase exposure and support their sales. Donate to local shelters, food banks, women's centres, hostels or shops, use Amazon Smile to automatically donate every time you shop and if you live in an area where charities provide your household with donation bags, use them appropriately.

2 Kindness and compassion. Provide acts of kindness to others to help improve morale and keep spirits up. Don't underestimate the power of a smile or small gesture. Action for Happiness have calendars you can use as daily prompts as an example, and I have self-care calendars and challenges you can download too!

3 Give your time. Volunteer for a befriending chat service, your local hospital or mutual aid community group. You can use your existing skills and abilities to help others, this might look like collecting more items on your weekly shop for someone on your road or it could be providing free expertise to help others!

4 Pay it forward. Focus on the things people have done for you in the past and do the same for a few other people either in your life or for total strangers. It could be sending a friend money so they can have a coffee on you, sending a local business some flowers or donating to a company to fund another persons therapy or coaching. This is something that aligns with my values and actions towards social justice, equality and equity, and it's the reason I created a sponsorship program.

5 If you own a business and you want to support others, provide free services or products. We all need to put food on the table and I'm sure there are ways that you can give and help others without expecting anything in return. All of these tips are inspired by my eBook and I'm giving these all away for free because I want you to thrive during difficult times and no matter the cost.

So how will you give today?

#29 Read for interest

#29 - Today's tip is all about taking time out of your day to read. Not for knowledge building, not to particularly learn anything and not to be productive. Just to enjoy and **be captivated by some words on a page!** When I find a good book, I truly get lost in it and I just cannot put it down.

What are you currently reading or going to start reading today?

#30 Prioritise your
mental health

#30 - How are you feeling and why? What can you do about it? Do you need to sit with uncomfortable or painful feelings, but find this hard? Are you able to express or share your feelings? Do you need to talk to someone? Do you need professional support right now? Do you need crisis support? If so, consider the things keeping you well or safe, your support system or those you can approach for help. Keeping yourself well and safe can be creative and amended at any time. Share your risk management ideas with others. [No matter what's going on for you, things can be problem solved and you will have better days again.](#)

1 Write a list of people you can contact with their numbers on a piece of paper or saved on your phone. Creating a personal action plan to manage if you're feeling extremely low or you have intent to act on suicidal thoughts is helpful because in the moment we are rarely able think rationally or with foresight, particularly if we are acting on emotions.

2 Create a distress tolerance or mental health crisis kit. This could include contacts but more so things that help you to feel better, all stored in one place, like a shoebox or draw. This could be photos, reminders of things you have overcome in your life so far, essential oils or a candle, a sketch or reading book, notepad and pens, music, knitting or sewing equipment, a game or puzzle, a stress-ball or pillow, your favourite drink or snacks.

3 If you actively self-harm, swap objects that can cause harm with safer options, ice and elastic bands are better than cutting and these methods have been shown to minimise harm if this is a frequent behaviour. Reduce any substance use; alcohol, drugs and caffeine.

For an extensive list of free crisis support and helplines click the link below.

If you are not living in the UK use the list to source your local services:

<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/stress-anxiety-depression/mental-health-helplines/>

For free talking therapies in the UK, you can see your GP or self-refer to you local IAPT or Mind service. Below you will find more directories in the UK:

<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/stress-anxiety-depression/free-therapy-or-counselling/>

#31 Stay connected

#31 - At times our days can merge into one, so today is all about taking time to maintain relationships with those you care about, even where there may be distance. We can all explore ways to maintain emotional connections with those we love and care for.

- 1 Reach out to family or friends and really spend time to check in with them today.
- 2 Set a specific time to be on social media and chat platforms like WhatsApp and Messenger.
- 3 **Organise a time to call loved ones!** It could be family, friends, a colleague or partner.
- 4 Play games, listen to music, watch movies or programmes together, this can be virtual too.
- 5 Continue to celebrate special occasions, send gifts, have cake, drinks or your favourite food.

Let me give you a peek into one of my typical 'staying connected' weekends. I might call my sister, engage in a quality-time activity with my partner or order a takeaway with family. I might have a distanced or in-person brunch with a close friend and spent the day with a friend at a spa or walking.

What does staying connected look like for you at the moment? How could it look?

#32 Meditate

#32 - Often regarded a passive relaxation practice, I would say that similarly to mindfulness, it is more an attention exercise which may not be relaxing at all. I have used meditation for many years, particularly when travelling in busy places. It grounds me to the present moment, it helps me to be more aware of my body on a physical and energetic level as well as my surroundings and there are so many ways you can try it out. Some of my favourites are chakra/ kundalini meditations, guided meditations, mindfulness meditations and as a reiki practitioner I practice visualisation meditations like the three diamonds even whilst providing hands on or off healing for others. Ultimately [meditation allows us to go inwards, to seek insight, stillness, resolution and clarity from within.](#) So, you can really see why this simple but powerful practice is beneficial for self-care.

1 Practice makes great. I don't believe perfect exists and one of the things you may ask yourself if you don't meditate much is, am I doing this right? Well providing you're sitting, laying, standing or even in a yoga position for a period of time, directing your attention to the now or your body then yes. You're doing it!

2 The longer you practice for the easier your mind, body and brain adapts to the practice. I sometimes explore neuroplasticity, which refers to the adaptability of our brains and how neural pathways physically change and build stronger connections for the things we do most. This is one of the reasons why it's hard to break a habit, but once we have built stronger connections doing or thinking about something in an alternative way, it becomes easier, faster and our brain's go to.

3 Improve motivation by setting up your space to meditate. Get whatever you want or need ready before-hand and plan it in your diary. Start with once a week for just a few minutes and increase as you see fit. A little meditation is better than none.

4 Use music, an App, a podcast or YouTube video for a guided experience or for the sound, burn candles, incense or essential oils to create the ambience you like. You can also use a scarf or towel to change the colour or patterns in your space, as my dad would say; 'Imagination is Creation,' be intuitive, go with what you feel you want or need daily.

#33 Try something new

#33 - Welcome, it's the start of a new day and this tip is all about using your time to try something new. Spending time on activities you feel passionate about or attempting new experiences is how we find ourselves, discover what we truly love in life, grow and cultivate good self-care practice. It's also another way of enjoying the present moment, [focusing on one pursuit](#), by just being... living in the moment.

As you can imagine this activity will be unique to you. Schedule a block of time into your calendar and prepare what you'll need. Reflect on how the activity goes after and write down your sense of achievement or pleasure from it. It's much easier to go back to activities we love if we have little reminders of just how much we enjoyed them. Reminders could be a post-it-note or a photo.

Enjoy finding out about something new today! What will you try out?

Remember to share it with me or a friend! #sharingiscaring

#34 Catch up
on life admin

#34 - Today is all about facing up to life admin. When there are a lot of demands or changes in your life, it's easy to lose track of what you need to be on top of. *There is an art to life admin and it feels great when we are on top of things.* Staying organised weekly or monthly helps to keep things in check, maintain work-life balance, reduce stress and free up more time for other activities, including additional acts of self-care.

- 1 Spend 10 minutes making sure you're up to date on payments, like bills and utilities.
- 2 Check your calendar, messages and emails for additional things you need to be in the loop about and don't avoid necessary correspondence.
- 3 Set aside some time for planning payments, appointments or setting reminders on your phone for contacting people. It could even be to request refunds or vouchers for cancelled events or poor services.
- 4 Schedule blocks of time for larger tasks. This could include planning for a major life event. It's essential we break up large tasks otherwise we only set ourselves up to fail by believing we can get everything done at once.
- 5 Utilise the help of others if you live with others. Split household responsibilities and check-in with one another about what's been paid or arranged for and what still needs sorting. Communication is key here, it's so easy to make assumptions and feel disappointed when the responsibility of tasks have not been communicated well. For a tip within a tip, make lists for essential items together to save money. I cover more on finance in tip #49.

#35 Just Breathe

#35 - I can assure you, today's tip is not an endorsement for Pearl Jam. [This is all about setting aside time to slow down.](#)

We have to be kind to ourselves, even more so when we are experiencing stressful life events or internal stressors. We are often living through global injustices, socio-economical changes and traumatic world events. However uncertain things may feel, the duality of any given situation brings with it a lesson or reflection for personal growth. COVID-19 brought a new strain of flu and along with it suffering and death, it put a strain on our economy, personal finances and key workers carried us through in a variety of ways, it also brought a halt to some of our busy lifestyles. For some 2020 was the first time in a long time that they stopped to spend time actually listening and connecting to family and friends. It was also a time for some, where being at home was all that could be done, some felt stuck and found it challenging listening to their needs, their minds, their bodies and take moments in the day to just sit with pain, discomfort or worries.

When you walk outside today take in the fresh air, when you have your shower just be still under the water and breathe. When you're doing your washing up just feel the bubbles or warm water on your hands for a moment or when you're reading pause to take in a moment of peace. Never feel guilty for taking time out of your day for a moment to just breathe.

When was the last time you took 2 minutes just to stop and breathe?

#36 Reflect on
vocational goals

#36 - We don't do this enough, but take time to reflect on the progress you have made professionally not just where you're heading. Setting occupational or vocational goals will be important to you if you value work-based progression particularly if you are getting back into employment or working your way towards a different industry. Not everyone places a high value in this area and so if you are out of employment, or you cannot work, then use this space for more general lifestyle goals. Answer the questions below to find some clarity, particularly useful for if you're feeling stagnant, as this is usually temporary.

- 1 What is it that you want for yourself?
- 2 Why?
- 3 What are the things holding you back?
- 4 How do you plan to get there?
- 5 What can you make a start on today?
- 6 Who, if anyone, can help you?

Spend some time celebrating your achievements, as well as setting yourself up for success; updating your CV, planning cover letters, studying, training, volunteering, CPD activities or working on areas of your business for fellow entrepreneurs.

And remember, there's no rush, after all, where are you rushing to? [Completing your studies or vocational goals sooner, only means working in that area for longer](#), unless you intend to continually develop.

#37 Focus on gratitude

#37 - During times of stress or difficulty gratitude can be an empowering tool! I'll share on how gratitude has helped me cope with loss and tips on how to practice gratitude.

My dad was staying in Sierra Leone throughout the prior Ebola pandemic in which quarantine lasted for two years. The onset of COVID-19 was a highly triggering time for me for this reason, but I coped well because I accepted my feelings and I chose to direct my focus towards the good in my life, the people, attributes and experiences I had / have.

Trying to navigate life during unprecedented change and anticipating bereavement or living with loss is complex. Grief is not linear and doesn't just stop at 6 months. Using a grief cycle can help you to identify where you're at on any given day and manifesting gratitude can help you to cope with the pain or transitions. Adopting a balanced perspective and practicing acts of gratitude is not the same as ignoring our discomfort or pain. We can address both. Positive psychology does not solve all of our problems but it does help us to adopt optimism and find peace. It's not helpful to constantly ruminate or bargain with ourselves. We don't have to suffer twice.

When you are missing family, friends, partners or even pets and going through complex bereavements, be kind with yourself. Allow yourself space to cry, be self-compassionate and practice gratitude. This is the best answer to coping that I've found.

- 1 Write down the things you're grateful for in your journal or document things you're grateful for on a piece of paper and collect them in a jar daily
- 2 Send a message to those you are grateful to have in your life and tell them why
- 3 Write down a challenging time in your life and then all the positives that came from this

How are you practicing gratitude?

Who are you grateful for?

How are you dealing with grief, loss or change?

#38 Write a card to
compliment someone

#38 - Hey, Check out tip 37 for more on gratitude and coping with grief! Today's tip for self-care leads on from this and the focus is on complimenting others.

We often reserve the nice things we think about others, but ironically, we feel most fulfilled when we share with others and this gift is free! You may already know how to go about this but if you want some help, here are some prompts.

- 1 Select the person you wish to focus on.
- 2 Think about specific events or the qualities, strengths and attributes of this person.
- 3 Write down your message and mail it to them. If you prefer to do this digitally send it via email or take a photo of your message to send.
- 4 Personalise it for their taste, references, colours, imagery.

#39 Listen to
nature

#39 - Spend time today being around nature, at our core, [we are nature](#), which is why it takes us to our baseline. Being connected to nature makes us feel at home as well as a part of something larger than ourselves. Try to get out of the house for at least 30 minutes and surround yourself with the sounds of the breeze passing through the trees and the birds tweeting. You can also do this at an open window in the house.

Going for a daily walk provides me space to clear my mind and can help you to de-stress and keep your body active! Walking throughout the initial UK national lockdown was my saviour. It truly motivated me to continue with all of my activities.

#40

Cook something
new or healthy

#40 - Create. Eat. Love... Today spend some time planning a healthy meal or try cooking or baking something you've never made before! When I'm low in energy doing activities that allow me to be creative really help to lift my spirits!

1 Cook with what you have. This promotes creativity in the kitchen and helps with combining different foods you may not have considered before. It also minimises food waste.

2 Research new recipes, gain influence from the internet, cook books or styles of cooking from different countries.

3 Cook, bake and style your plate to your guts content.

4 Similarly to before, if you can, plan enough for the household and create together. Plan your portion sizes before cooking and use smaller bowls and plates to feel more content when eating.

5 Listen to music or a podcast whilst cooking for motivation.

That's all! Let me know what you have been trying out in the kitchen and share about it!

#41 Movement & Exercise

#41 - Hey you! This self-care tip is a reminder to keep active today. Check out tip #8 for more on movement, pacing, break down activities and balancing over-activity and sedentary behaviours.

Maintaining activity daily can help to improve low mood as well as provide brief transitions in your day and manage your time better. When thinking about exercise consider all of the movement you do in a day and try to balance your activity throughout the day as well as your week overall. It's far healthier to have frequent movement for 15 minutes daily than to workout for an hour one day and then be on the couch for the rest of the week.

- 1 How can I strike balance today?
- 2 Look at your current habits, when do you need to take it easy or move around more?
- 3 Schedule in the changes and implement.

I hope this one is helpful to keep you moving!

#42 Staying
Motivated

#42 - When I initially shared these tips on Instagram, I posted a poll and received quite a few requests for topics to cover, so here is the second tip in response to that. Self-motivation is a counter-intuitive skill, you see, **in order to feel motivated to act, we must first act**. Sometimes we have passion to do so but what happens when we don't? Read on!

CBT is a very practical therapeutic modality which underpins many coaching practices. It focuses primarily on the idea that our thoughts, feelings, physiology and behaviours are linked and impact one another. So I'm going to focus today on tips you can use right now in order to challenge cognitions and behaviours that are keeping you feeling stagnant.

1 What's your mindset? If your self talk sounds like this, "I can't be bothered" or "I can't do this," then in the words of Henry Ford, you're right. Our mind is very powerful, it shapes our perspectives and what we allow for ourselves, it builds our expectations and beliefs. In order to get things done you need to first be telling yourself that you want to do it or that you can do it.

2 Prepare for activities. This is a great way to motivate yourself to act. Want to go to the gym or do a home workout? Leave your kit and trainers out. Want to plan a healthy meal? Have a piece of paper, a pen and a recipe book or have your phone to hand to create a new shopping list.

3 Use aids and opportunity. Anything and anyone that can help. Feel more energised when listening to music? Great! Why not listen to music when you're cleaning the house? Feel most excited to cook when some of the prep is already done? Fantastic! Dice your vegetables and freeze them beforehand. You get the idea and you can schedule tasks off the back of other activities or ask someone to assist you, to increase the likelihood you'll do it, like going for a food shop with a friend.

4 Check in with someone. If you have someone in your life to hold you accountable for reaching your goals, you're more likely to stay motivated and make changes. From not biting your nails to saving more money. You can both agree how you would like them to bring up the conversation or provide you encouragement and reminders.

Keep it up and you'll increase your motivation!

#43 Create space

#43 - This looks like taking time out and prioritising your needs. Choose how you want to check-in with yourself and make time for what you really need. Some examples might be; not going on social media, replying to messages tomorrow, doing some box-fit, ordering take-out or relaxing in front of a series.

- 1 Listen to your body and mind. What is it asking for?
- 2 Create space for what you need or want, by setting the scene and communicating to others to set a boundary
- 3 Learn to feel comfortable being in your own company

#44 Understand
your stress

#44 - I want to highlight something invaluable today, that not only aids the practice of self-care but could possibly even help you live longer! You read that right. We all know that stress kills, it kills our time, it burns us out, it impacts our physical as well as mental health and it can take years off our lives. But did you know that the impact stress has on you is more to do with how you perceive your stress, more so than the stress itself? Altering the beliefs you have about experiencing stress, when appropriate, is not some new-age fluff to keep you in denial or excessively optimistic, it can genuinely help you to feel better even if your situation remains the same and in some cultures the appraisal of stress holds positive connotations.

Stress is an essential component to the human condition. Similarly to anxiety and pain it serves a function. Your stress responses are trying to highlight strains and is trying to keep you safe. How you perceive your stress can be what effects your immune system and the secretion of hormones like cortisol, if long-standing, can cause health conditions and premature death, not the stressor itself. Symptoms typically manifest physically in the body and can cause or exacerbate mental health issues. So, listen to your stress, anxiety and your physical pains, what's your body trying to tell you?

Building helpful coping strategies and resilience for both internal and external stressors can help improve how you experience stress. Particularly when you cannot change your past or eliminate hurtful or traumatic events from happening in your life. Accepting that some things are out of our control is paramount. Ask yourself today:

- 1 What's my relationship with stress like?
- 2 Do I perceive myself as stuck or unable to solve problems to difficult situations when stressors arise?... And why?
- 3 Could my body be telling me a story I'm misinterpreting? Could it be that it's telling me "watch out, prepare for this, gear up," and not "ah why do I have to, this is too much, I cannot cope?"
4. Try out passive relaxation exercises as well as physical activities to help reduce stress on a physiological level to reteach your body and autonomic nervous system what relaxation feels like.

#45 Spirit
and Faith

#45 - Reflect and draw on your spirituality or faith. Growing up in an agnostic home allowed me to truly explore life on an existential level and find my own relationship with the energy and life source that bonds all of us, whilst existing beyond us. Our beliefs may be different and that's okay, your beliefs are personal to you and space should be created for exploring life's important questions.

Answer these questions to start or strengthen your journey of self-discovery today:

- 1 Am in touch with my core, innate me? What does that feel like?
- 2 Am I giving myself what I need spiritually?
- 3 What are my beliefs - beyond societal constructs?... Why?
- 4 What do I feel when I touch my heart centre or the ground beneath me?
- 5 Who am I outside of my belief system?
- 6 Where do I draw my energy from?
- 7 Where do I channel my energy?
- 8 What is my life purpose?
- 9 Imagine it's your 80th birthday. What would I want people to know about me or to have shared with others over my lifetime?

I know, pretty deep, but coaching is a transformational process for a reason. This is what self-exploration looks like and it is an underpinning of life coaching. Having good self-insight allows you to answer life's tough questions with assurance but also accept that your perspective may and can change with time. *It's essential that you explore your whys, in order to curate the life you want for yourself.* When you truly know yourself and you're living in alignment with your authentic self through expression, life feels easier, sometimes lonelier but definitely more fulfilling.

#46 Reduce feelings
of guilt

#46 - Today I wanted to focus on thoughts of guilt. Guilt for not doing more or doing too much. Because it's oh so easy to slip into this frame of mind, which can impact how we feel. Similarly to shame, the negative self-critical thoughts associated with guilt can feel paralysing.

So, how can you break-up with guilt?

- 1 First you need to explore what you feel guilty about and why believe it.
- 2 Assess whether your conclusion of events is a fair and balanced perspective of your situation.
- 3 Focus on the learning points of the situation. *Is there a gift, a blessing or a lesson in this?*
- 4 Come to accept past actions or mistakes. Acting in alignment with this is taking responsibility for the specific things you did or now have control over. Forgive yourself, understand why you acted in a particular way and be kinder to yourself. One self-compassionate exercise you can try out, is writing a letter to your younger-self.

I hope these tips were useful for you! The next time you spend all your free time watching Netflix and not baking or learning a language, remember that rest is also productive and necessary for self-care as well as self-development.

You can do it all, but not all at once.

#47 Re-evaluate
your routine

#47 - Things change, our priorities change, life events outside of our control occur and when they do, so should your routine. Routines are adaptive, which is why today's tip is all about re-evaluating your routine when needed. Living through a quarantine can be a traumatic time for many and it does not need to be compared to other traumatic events. For me it has brought about constant and rapid occupational changes which has felt highly taxing. So pouring self-care into myself has increased along with adjusting my routine to fit current circumstances. Maybe you've lost loved ones, maybe your work pattern looks completely different, maybe you've been made redundant or you're taking constant risks with your health or in self-employment. Whatever the changes, why not re-evaluate your schedule?

- 1 What is it that I need to get done this week? And when can I schedule it?
- 2 Are my basic needs being met? Safety, hydration, nutrition, movement, physical health, sleep, emotional and mental wellbeing.
- 3 What is it that I want to do for myself today?
- 4 What's working for me at present?
- 5 What can I continue? What needs to change?

Think about your day split up into blocks of time or by tasks and reinvent a routine that truly works for you! You've got this!

#48 Prioritise
your tasks

#48 - Prioritising tasks by their importance to you as well as their urgency is a great way to evaluate how you're spending your time currently, in comparison to how you would like to or need to be!

Learning to prioritise may not come naturally to you and all too often you can feel stuck because you're not using the majority of your recreational time on the things you love. For today's self-care tip, practice completing a simple matrix, focusing on [what's important to you and not important vs. what's urgent and not urgent](#).

That's it, easy-peasy, lemon-sqweezy, macaroni-cheesy... Yup I'll stop now!

#49

Get on top
of finances

#49 - Hello, another day, another tip! Our relationship with money is often left out of the conversation of self-care but it's a really important one. *All of us have a complex relationship with money, deriving from early lived experiences.* Adjusting my beliefs on money has helped me to overcome a scarcity mindset and in reality this looks like me feeling confident charging for my services for example.

Your childhood experiences will affect your deep rooted beliefs and emotional responses to finances and inform not only how you save and spend, but also how you view related matters such as pay, investing, loss and equity.

When it comes to self-care, having debt and money issues under control is paramount to wellbeing, even if the debts are still there. So here are some tips to help you shift your mindset and possibly those zeros on your bank statement.

- 1 What's my relationship with money?
- 2 How do I feel about having money in abundance?
- 3 How do I feel about losing it?
- 4 Am I spending to feel good or is money just the means?
- 5 When it comes to saving what's the best way for me to save or invest my money? Speak with an independent financial advisor or contact your bank.
- 6 Money is not just about income, it's also how much you spend and retain. £5.00 a day is still £1,825.00 a year. You read that right. Write down things you idly spend on as well as what you'd do with that money instead.

#50

Reflect on
your self-care

#50 - This is the final tip in the self-care series and it's all about taking time to evaluate what's aiding your self-care practice. It's an invaluable exercise, which will help you stay on track, gain self-insight and continue your personal development journey.

So, answer the following:

- 1 What worked for me in this series? What didn't so much?
- 2 Why?
- 3 What do I want to continue to implement in my life?
- 4 What are the meaningful activities I want to be doing on a daily, weekly or monthly basis?
- 5 How can I create a self-care plan and stick to it?
- 6 Would I benefit from further 1:1 coaching for a personalised and in-depth approach?
Pssst! Just drop me and email!

Thank You!

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