



2020 has been and gone and what a year it has been!

The past 12 months have been like no other in living memory. And after all we've been through there is a real need take a compassionate look at self-development and our mental health in 2021.

How can setting a theme help my wellbeing?

New Year self-improvement can be a positive thing with benefits for your mental and physical health.

This year when thinking of self-improvement, find things that work for you, irrespective of what others are doing. And remember to ask for support if you need it.

New Year's resolutions can be fuelled by unhelpful self-criticism. 'A festival of finding ways in which we are not enough'. So, instead we propose that you try setting a theme:

This year we hope you can

1. Accept who you are
2. Nourish your body
3. Bring intention into your actions
4. Take time for yourself

Accept who you are

Resist the urge to strive for an entirely new you in 2021. Instead accept you last year, today and tomorrow.

Approach personal growth, habit change and goals with a kinder self-talk that cares for your mental wellbeing.

Evaluate the relationship you have with yourself. Ask would you speak to somebody else in the way you speak about yourself? The relationship you have with yourself is crucial to your own wellbeing and to creating healthy and happy relationships with others.

Being kind to yourself regularly is one of the best things you can do.

5 habits to improve the relationship with you in 2021

- Invest in yourself by spending 15-30 minutes each day doing something you enjoy
- Write down positive things about yourself when your inner critic finds faults
- Act as if you were your own best friend and be kind and supportive when you stumble or feel you have failed
- Do something to wind down and relax at the end of each day
- Take a few minutes each day to appreciate the small wins you have achieved

Here's to taking time to accept yourself in 2021.



Resisting the urge to join up to the latest fitness or diet fad as soon as 1 Jan arrives can be hard.

But it can be a great idea to try taking a deep breath, pausing and working out in what ways you want to nourish your body and mind in 2021 instead.

People tend to have a renewed drive for positive change in the New Year and when channelled calmly and kindly this can have wonderful result for your physical and mental wellbeing.

Get others involved in your goals: Social support can be a great motivator, and sharing your experiences, goals and achievements can help you to keep focus and enthusiasm.

4 questions to ask yourself before you dive into new fitness ideas

- What do you want to get out of being active?
- Would you prefer to be indoors or outdoors?
- Would you like to be in a group or do an individual activity?
- Would you like it to be integrated into daily life, such as doing housework, going on a walk, doing gardening (these are physical activities too)

Physical activity is available to all, has few costs attached, and can be tailored to your needs.

Here's to nourishing your body and mind in a way that works for you in 2021.

After the festive break, checking back into reality can feel hectic or see you launch into autopilot.

By bringing intention into your actions through mindfulness you can counter the New Year urgency to sprint when January arrives.

Mindfulness is a way of paying attention to the present moment, using techniques like meditation, breathing and yoga.

It helps us to become more aware of our thoughts and feelings so that, instead of being overwhelmed by them, we're better able to manage them.

Mindfulness has been shown to have positive effects on several aspects of whole-person health: including the mind, the brain, the body, and behaviour, as well as a person's relationships with others.

Try out our 1 minute mindfulness activity

Take a minute a day to bring intent to you – mindfulness doesn't need to take a lot of effort or time... to be precise it can take just one whole minute, 60 seconds, 60000 milliseconds!

- **Breathing** – become present with the physical activity of breathing
- **Body scan** – check in and bring awareness to the sensations in your body, head to toe



- **Mindful walking** - bring awareness to the sensation of walking, how your feet feel when they connect with the ground, how the muscles in your legs feel when they move
- **Mindful listening** – bring awareness to tuning in to your environment, listen to the sounds around you

Take time for yourself

Sometimes life can become a little overwhelming, and especially when you've got an expectation as well as the exciting opportunities that come with having a whole new year ahead of you.

We recommend this year when things go from exciting to a prolonged period of stress that you hit the pause button and do something for you.

When you feel the balance isn't quite right, pause, be your friend and ask yourself:

Is this level of stress causing me a problem? Can I identify the causes? What small changes can I make to my lifestyle? Could I ... eat healthier, exercise, take time out, be mindful, get some rest and sleep, and most of all be kind to myself.

9 tips from our supporters to help you care for yourself and alleviate stress

- Watch funny movies
- Take a walk in nature
- Set aside 10 minutes a day to relax and collect your thoughts
- Paint, draw or doodle
- Unplug the phone and journal
- Express your feelings
- Spend time with positive people
- Get a hot cup of something
- Cheer up someone who is feeling down

