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# The Pandemic Might Be Ending, But Your Self Care Routine Shouldn't

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Over the past year and a half, just about everyone has come to deeply appreciate the importance of self-care. When you can't go out with your friends, or host dinner parties, or participate in the group hobbies and sports that are such an important emotional outlet, building self-care practices into your daily routine is especially important.

But with the pandemic on the wane in Canada and the United States, most of us are going through another major shift back to a "normal" that no longer feels normal.

During this time of transition, it is particularly important not to lose sight of the self-care practices that have gotten us through the pandemic. Though we may no longer need to worry about cabin fever and isolation, going back to the office will involve new forms of anxiety and stress. Being intentional about self-care is still important, so here are some tips for how to keep your routine going.

**1. Give Yourself Something to Get Excited About**

Many of the best self-care routines are built around the endorphin rush that comes from minor daily progress on something every day. Yoga, reading, making puzzles, knitting — all of these things give you the wonderful feeling that you are making something.

If you want to keep the momentum up, keep focused on your goals and give yourself something to get excited about. Make a point of educating yourself on the best yarns for knitting shawls, or new stitching techniques that will require you to move out of your comfort zone.

Not only will this remind you why you fell in love with your chosen craft in the first place, it will also make it easier to continue practicing self-care.



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**2. Be Intentional About Your Routine**

Humans are creatures of habit — even if you don't consciously choose a routine, you're bound to fall into one. Many of us had to be very intentional about setting up healthy routines during lockdowns and social distancing, and now that things are opening up again, it is important to stick with these practices.

Taking a couple of hours out of your weekend to bullet journal about what parts of your pandemic routine you valued and found life giving, and how you can balance those practices with post-pandemic life, will help you handle the transition in a conscious and life-giving way.

**3. Guard Your Time**

As things start opening back up, there's going to be a lot of pressure to engage in lots of activities. It's summer, after all, and plenty of people will want to celebrate their newfound freedom by throwing parties and organizing get-togethers.

But you shouldn't feel pressured to spend every spare minute working or socializing. Taking on more obligations than you can handle certainly won't make the transition any easier, and it is going to be more important than ever to embrace the power of "no" over the next few months.

Long before the pandemic, many of us struggled to strike the right balance between work, leisure, and social life. And as the threat of the virus recedes, the reminder of how stressful and demanding "normal" life can be is bound to cause anxiety.

Keeping up the self-care practices that got you through the quarantines is the best way to ensure that you maintain your equilibrium and preserve your mental and physical health in the midst of all these changes.

*Photo by Elizabeth McDaniel on Unsplash*

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