



Five ways to hold it together

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The first few weeks of 2020 are already bringing more bad news than anticipated or wanted. It can become tough to go about the day with a positive mentality. It seems that every day there's a new fear to face or piece of bad news to process. A new year might symbolise a fresh start, but it carries the continued baggage of the years gone by.

My feelings are neatly summed up in the following quote from Dr. Lynne Henderson: "One of the ways of being kind to ourselves is not to let the pain in the world overwhelm us."

I first published a version of this post on my own blog, a predominantly travel-based platform. I chose to write on this topic to summarise my tips on holding it together when it seems the world around us is constantly on the verge of collapse; by burning, self-destructing or falling victim to a global pandemic.

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1. Look good, feel good

It rings similar to a quote by Georges St-Pierre (although this quote and other variances have been attributed to a number of other people): "If you look good, you feel good, and if you feel good, you do good."

While it may seem superficial, there's truth in the fact that if you look good you're going to feel good about yourself and that motivates you to put your best foot forward and be the best version of yourself.

When I walk out my front door with some effort having gone into what I look like, I feel like I can conquer anything. I'm more productive, more focused and overall, prouder of who I am and what I can achieve.



Sunrise on Wayalailai Island, Fiji
JANA MEERMAN / STUFF-NATION

2. Turn off the news

At some point, many hours and many scrolls into a black hole of news, you may find yourself in despair. The world seems to constantly be collapsing in on itself and you may feel helpless. The mounting news articles threatening of imminent war, climate disasters and borderline global destruction pile on your shoulders and you feel that there is nothing you can do.

Well, perhaps, at some point, to preserve your sanity, the best thing you can do is to turn off the news.

I'm not saying don't inform yourself. I'm not advocating for ignorance. All I'm saying is that sometimes, enough is enough. Pick a few credible news sources, read the relevant articles of the day and then move on.

Your life needs to be filled with much more than the sorrow of the world surrounding you.

3. Take care of yourself

Maintaining a personal routine will look different from one individual to the next. All I can say is following a sense of structure that keeps you and your body aligned, feeling good and running at maximum health and proficiency is a path worth pursuing.

Self structure is just as important as physical structure and it can be a comfort to know that there are things you can control, even if perhaps solving world hunger, climate change and war aren't (yet) among those things.

4. Enjoy the little things

Find pleasure in the small things. A successful day, week, month or year is not defined by the things you own, the money you make or the milestones you achieve.

Perhaps it's a meal shared with those you love, a sunny day, a bird singing outside your window, smiling at a stranger or the pleasure of a positive interaction. Maybe it's a wonderful chapter you read, a great new song you heard that you can't stop playing on repeat, the smell of fresh laundry or, my favourite of all, a pretty sunset you can't seem to drag your eyes from.

And as Robert Brault, an American writer, so eloquently put it: "Enjoy the little things, for one day you may look back and realise they were the big things."

5. Slow down

There is great value in saving up for a rainy day, as they say. Allow yourself the awareness and the space to put money aside, to save up for a greater goal, to have a longer term sense of purpose and achievement. There is great satisfaction in finally having the time and money to pursue a dream long on the horizon.

Like how I booked a one-way ticket to go see the world, over a year ago, and have been travelling full-time ever since. Every penny saved was worth it.

It all falls under the umbrella of slowing down.

We don't need to have everything, right now. We don't need every single new product that is thrown in our face by customised advertising based off of our digital footprint. We don't need to spend money every day.

And in summation, I suppose, we don't need every single answer right now. We need longevity, passion, determination, sanity, peace, self-preservation, respect and ultimately, love - for the world and for ourselves.

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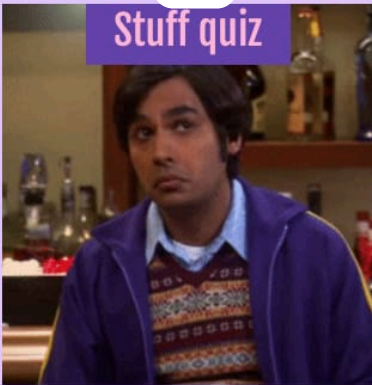
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