



## Self Care Shorts Digital Magazine 001



**Welcome to the first edition of the Self Care Shorts digital magazine.**

I'm hoping to inspire you to take control of your self care, get organised, and have the most productive life you can have! Here comes 2021!

**I've got loads of ideas to share with you.** All of them tried and tested and some with the Self Care Shorts seal of approval! I don't like to tell you about anything that I haven't tried for myself. Sometimes I'll tell you about things I've tried that didn't work out for me but that still may have value for you. Because how we self-care and how we manage ourselves is quite a personal thing.

**We all need all of the elements that are available to support us in some balance or other.** That balance is the bit that is personal to us. For me, if I need to sort myself out, a run always does it. That doesn't mean that I don't have to keep an eye on my nutrition and sleep, but exercise is always my go to fix. Yours may be different. But we must have an eye on them all.

**Small steps, applied over a period of time, lead to big changes**



**"the practice of activities that individuals initiate and perform on their own behalf to maintain life, health, and well-being"**

Grafton and Coyne



About 80% of your immune system is located in your gut. Hippocrates said that 'all disease begins in the gut' and that food is our medicine. Maybe you are what you eat?

## Which day do you think we are at our most productive?



This Friday is the most important day of next week! Plan it!



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You might be surprised to find that research seems to indicate that we are at our most effective on a Tuesday. But why is this? Surely, rested from the weekend, Monday would be our best day? No – we spend Monday figuring out just what it is that we need to do. What shall we do with the mess we left behind on Friday when we hit the weekend?

**The secret is to make this Friday the most important day of next week!** How you leave things on a Friday will have a direct impact on how productive you are next week.

**Friday afternoon is a low productivity point so make use of this by spending the time planning next week.** Make sure your diary is up to date. Make sure you have all of the things ready that you will need – phone numbers, reports, information, minutes from previous meetings, so that when you get to work on Monday you can get straight to it. Figure out what you are going to do this Friday afternoon so you can be productive from the 'get go' on Monday morning.



"Climb the mountains and get their good tidings. Nature's peace will flow into you as sunshine flows into trees. The winds will blow their own freshness into you, and the storms their energy."

John Muir

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Those who benefitted the most were the mother-daughter pairs who had walked in the natural setting rather than in the shops. Positive interactions between mother and daughter improved after the outdoors walk. Attention was improved for the mothers during the nature walk and during both walks for the daughter. The nature walk created a positive impact on both cohesion and closeness. The mothers and daughters were unanimous - the nature setting was more relaxing.

● CAROLINE WEBB ●

**'An extraordinary book'**  
Susan Cain, author of *Quiet*

# HOW TO HAVE A GOOD DAY

# Think Bigger, Feel Better and Transform Your Working Life





**Know what is to do  
Plan it  
Do it!**

Set your intention  
to task



then pay attention  
to the task



"WHEN FACED WITH A  
PROBLEM YOU DO NOT  
UNDERSTAND, DO ANY PART OF IT  
YOU DO UNDERSTAND,  
THEN LOOK AT IT AGAIN." HEINLEIN

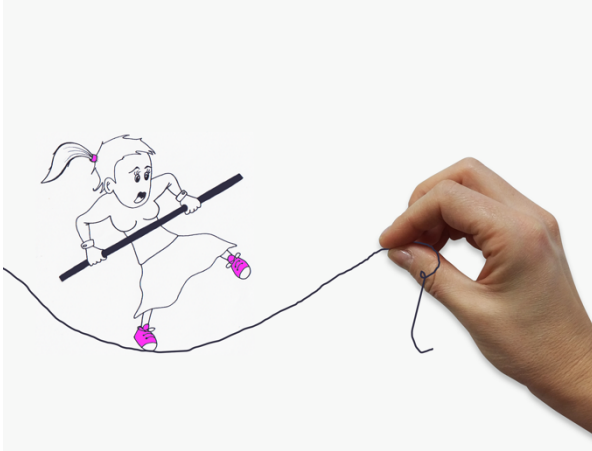
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**SELF CARE SHORTS**  
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# FEAR IS NOT A FACT



In her podcast **Checking In**, Susan David, Professor of psychology at the University of Nevada said something interesting that peaked my attention.

She said, **'fear is not fact'**. I pondered this because to be honest when I'm feeling fear it feels pretty blinkin' factual to me! It's an emotion born out of whatever is going on around us. It's what is going on around us that we need to pay attention to not the

manifested emotion. That's what she was getting at. We don't have to respond – but rather we need to be compassionate with ourselves

**She suggests that what we are after is noticing the feeling.** We should notice it and create space to see the feeling for what it is. She says that in doing so we hit what she calls 'choice points' – I refer to them as boundary moments. A boundary moment is a point or a line where we can decide how to proceed. You can decide to be driven by your emotions or you can decide to take a practical approach to solving whatever it is that is causing the emotion to manifest itself. I'd suggest we need to be aware of our emotions but not driven by them. We need to be driven by a practical pragmatic response. We need to take a look at whatever the 'thing' is – examine it – and plan how we will deal with it.



**This is the analogy that David Allen uses of having a 'mind like water'.** When a rock is thrown into a still body of water it creates ripples. The water accepts the energy of the rock and absorbs it. We need to be the same. Examine that thing that is causing us the emotion and absorb it pragmatically into our sphere of

responsibility. Or eject it from our sphere of responsibility if it's nothing to do with us.

Your sphere of responsibility is the bubble that contains everything that is yours to deal with. By maintaining your sphere in order you stand a chance of keeping the chaos out – or at least only letting in what legitimately needs to be let in.

## Unmanaged Chaos creates stress

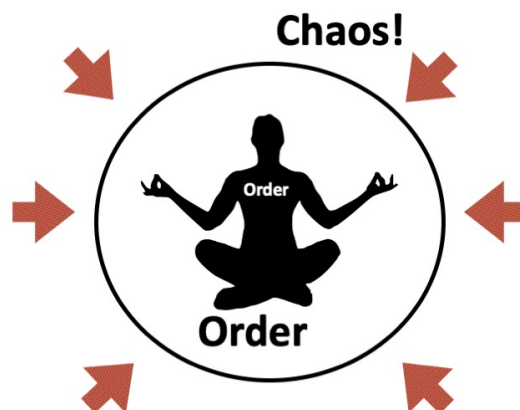
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**The problem with stress is that it is toxic.** Stress has been shown to damage neurons in the hippocampus leading to memory problems. The amygdala (the thing that drives your ‘fight or flight’ stress response) is not affected or compromised by stress. In fact, it can grow larger when you are exposed to long term stress. It can be aroused by stimuli that act as emotional reminders even though you cannot recall the events that caused the stress in the first place. Think about that free floating anxiety people often experience on a Sunday evening about work the next day – your anxious but can’t attach it to anything specific except it’s Monday tomorrow.

Over time you can become consciously immune to the stress, not be aware of it, but continue to have a physical and emotional response to it. You are in fight or flight mode constantly – you respond emotionally – immediately – without thinking.

**The problem for us, if we are experiencing constant stress (or any level of stress really) is that The Body Keeps the Score** (in the words of Bessel van der Kolk). Long term stress leads to physical problems as well as the more obvious emotional and mental ones. Stress makes you ill. You must do something about it.


**All of the things I talk about**, here, in this Digital ‘Magazine’, on my blog, and in my books help manage stress when applied consistently. It’s not easy. Self-care is hardest when you most need it because usually when you most need it is when you have the least time for it. But you must find the time. Our workplaces, our families, and our friends can all add to or reduce our stress, but ultimately self-responsibility is essential. And I know that’s a difficult message but it’s the reality of the situation. Your job may demand too much of you, your family may need more from you than you have to give, you friends may need your shoulder from time to time. But, as I’m sure you have heard, you can’t pour from an empty cup. In order to give you have to give something back to yourself. You have to find internal order first, then find order in your sphere of responsibility, then only let in the chaos that is genuinely yours to deal with.



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