

**- Mind and body****TIPS ON HOW TO FEEL BETTER IN THE YEAR AHEAD**

If you want to improve your mind, body and spirit in 2023 and be happier and more fulfilled, these ideas may give you a boost

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Instead of crumbling under the pressure of a singular, nebulous new year's resolution to exercise more or eat healthier, try reflecting on smaller goals that could help you feel better throughout the year.

An efficient way to do this, says Denise Williams, owner of the US-based Well-Play Counselling & Well-being Centre, is to mark those goals on your calendar month by month.

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**1. January: Redefine what success means to you, then visualise it**

Consider using the first month of the year to redefine what success means to you. Perhaps you've been judging yourself based on an old idea – or someone else's idea – of success and it's time for an upgrade. Williams says ask yourself what is success to you: "How do you know if you have got to your goal if you don't know what your goal is? You've got to start at the end and kind of work your way back into it."

**2. February: Romanticise your daily life – even the small moments**

Regardless of whether you have a Valentine's Day date, block out the lovers' month to prioritise self-love. This could look like cooking yourself a nourishing meal, going on a daily walk regardless of how busy your work schedule is, saying "no" more often, or setting clear boundaries with others. Williams recommends using February to "celebrate yourself" in the ways that only you know how to.

**3. March: Prioritise rest**

For Tricia Hersey, the founder of the Nap Ministry – an organisation that examines rest as a form of resistance and reparations – the act of resting is a way to push back against grind culture. Resting can be deciding to have a slow morning routine, drinking a cup of tea, not thinking about work or other responsibilities as you're doing a leisure activity or spending time with loved ones, or taking a walk.

**4. April: Declutter your space**

Use "spring cleaning" to get rid of that jumper you have been holding onto because it was expensive (even though you never wear it) and the expired spices and herbs hiding in the back of your kitchen cabinet (some can be composted or upcycled). Another thing that might need some decluttering is your phone. The next time you're relaxing, browse through your photo library and delete images you no longer want, making space for new memories.

**5. May: Take your workout outdoors**

Research shows that working out in nature can motivate you to get moving, improve your mental health and provide a feeling of escapism from everyday life. Plus, it's free.

For May, consider doing your workout outdoors at a place you've been wanting to visit, such as a hiking trail, beach or park.

**6. June: Take that solo trip you've been dreaming about**

Williams encourages her clients, especially those who are business executives or have jam-packed schedules, to take solo trips because they offer people "a different type of self-reliance".

"You get to learn things about yourself because you get quiet and it's just you," she says.

**7. July: Cultivate a new friendship**

The International Day of Friendship is July 30. Push yourself this month to reach out to that person you met at a mutual friend's party a few months ago and schedule some one-on-one hang-out time with them, or reconnect with someone you haven't seen in a while.

#### 8. August: Reclaim an old hobby or pick up a new one

In August, give yourself permission to reclaim an old hobby that brings you joy or try a new one that's been calling your name.

"Just [connect with] that child in you, and you will see your imagination begin to run wild oftentimes," Williams says.

Then ask yourself how that translates to activities that you can do now, she adds. If you enjoyed playing tag as a child, consider going to laser tag, or if you liked playing hide-and-seek, visit an escape room.

How do you know if you have got to your goal if you don't know what your goal is?

DENISE WILLIAMS, WELL-BEING CENTRE FOUNDER

#### 9. September: Upgrade your routines

September 22 marks the end of summer and often our return to the routine. But what if your old routines are no longer serving you?

Use September to evaluate how to make your routines reflect the lifestyle you want. An example could be creating a nighttime routine that makes you look forward to winding down.

#### 10. October: Implement a gratitude practice

Start making a running list of wins, whether tiny or big, and moments that make you smile on a regular basis. It's an easy gratitude practice, especially during stressful times.

#### 11. November: Do something nice for someone else

November 13 marks World Kindness Day, Thanksgiving falls on the fourth Thursday of the month, and the Tuesday after that is Giving Tuesday. Use these moments to support someone else, such as phoning a loved one who's been going through a difficult time or volunteering at a charity.

#### 12. December: Avoid feeling financially and physically drained

Explore ways that you can trim your spending and the number of responsibilities you have on your plate during the festive month.

Louis Barajas, a Los Angeles-based certified financial planner, encourages his clients to create their financial game plan for the next year in December, so that they can start off fresh in January.

"Usually when we're meeting [clients] in January, it's kind of too late [by then]," Barajas says.